THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly Magazine
Founded Aº Dⁱ 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

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ALVA—By M. de BLOWITZ

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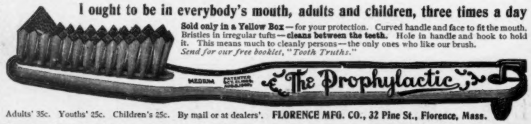

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Recollections of M. de Blowitz

"YOU ARE WHAT IS CALLED L'HOMME DU JOUR"

ALVA

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A FEW weeks ago General de Galliffet announced that for the last forty years he had been taking daily notes, and he thereupon began the publication in two Parisian papers of fragments of these notes. These fragments, by an odd coincidence, contained every now and then blunders in dates which did not escape the attention of his readers.

I desire to say to my own readers that I have never in my life taken a single note as to the events in which I have been mixed up, and that consequently nothing would be more natural than that I should from time to time make certain errors as to date, quite like General de Galliffet. But I attach no importance to a possibility of this sort, being concerned especially with the accuracy of the facts which I relate.

I nevertheless recall, as if it were yesterday, that on September 5, 1878, under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, I met my dear old friend Hector Pessard coming out of one of the big hotels that abound in this street. M. Hector Pessard was then the manager and editor-in-chief of the National, which, when he took the paper over, was on the point of disappearing altogether, but which he had rapidly made one of the most important organs of the moment in Paris. The National belonged, indeed, to that class of Parisian newspapers which bud, bloom and die; for, during now nearly a third of a century in which I have belonged to journalism, I have seen born, grow up and perish so many newspapers that, as I look back upon them, my memory resembles those old Norman churches surrounded by a cemetery, and into which one never enters knowing exactly whether one is to witness a baptism, a marriage or a funeral.

"Ah," said M. Hector Pessard to me, "I am delighted to meet you, for I was intending to go to see you. You are only just back from the Berlin Congress; you are sailing on the top of the wave; your name is constantly under the public eye; it is well known that the Prime Minister, M. Dufaure, has had a long conversation with you on what took place at the Berlin Congress. You are what is called *l'homme du jour*, and you will not be surprised, therefore, if I beg you to come with me to call on Madame Marsa Chamil, who lives in this hotel, and whom I have promised that you shall go to see her."

"But in the first place," I replied, "I am, as you say, for the time being, very much occupied; and secondly, who is Madame Marsa Chamil, whose name I have never heard mentioned?"

"*Mon Dieu*," replied Hector Pessard, "I will tell you frankly. I don't know very much better than you. It is, in a way, in order to find out, that we would all, Henri de Pène and his wife, Francis Magnard, Henri Fouquier and the others, like you to come to see her, because we suppose that, with your knowledge of things and of the European *coulisses*, you will give us some help in deciphering the very interesting enigma which she appears to be. We call her generally 'the Duchess,' and she accepts the name with a smile, because everything belonging to her in this hotel—the table-linen, the china, the glass and the silver, and all the rare and curious *bibelots*—are marked with a ducal crown, and attest great wealth and elegance."

"And what sort of woman is she, the Duchess?"

"She is a woman not yet forty, still charming, *distinguée*, a tall, graceful *brunette*, although not unmistakably of great family, who speaks several languages correctly, knows the upper circles in most continental countries, spends a good deal of money, making many purchases, has a very smart team and respectful and well-trained servants, entertains freely and with taste and refinement, pays her bills regularly and promptly, has the most fashionable dressmakers, goes out little, talks of men and things with much knowledge and insight, but rarely of herself, while never speaking ill of others; and finally a woman who has with her a young lady named Alva, of whom one gets only rare and furtive glimpses, a girl of eighteen, absolutely well bred, whom the Duchess calls 'my child,' a fact authorizing the supposition that it is her daughter."

"Really," I replied, "you arouse my curiosity keenly, but I am bound to tell you that I am curious only by profession, caring little to know what I cannot repeat publicly. But what you have just said makes it impossible for me to refuse to make the visit that you propose, and, if you will allow me, as soon as I am a little more at liberty I will send you word, and we will go together to call upon the Duchess."

Were I to relate all the traps which hatred or jealousy or mere *méchanceté* have laid for me, now for more than thirty years, not all the columns of a newspaper would suffice. I will mention, then, only a single one, in order to give you an idea of the methods employed to catch me napping and to involve me in irremediable complications.

When the second Dreyfus trial broke out I beheld one day entering my home a man still young, quite out of breath, and with the face of a person in trouble. He related that he was a married man and a father, that he held a confidential position at the War Office, that he had just met with heavy losses at the gaming-table, and that, in exchange for a sum that would help him to save his reputation, he would furnish me with military documents of the highest importance. It was, as I learned later, merely a man who had been sent to me by powerful enemies, solely to implicate me in this wretched business.

I say this in order to explain the precautions that I took in the matter which I am now relating, and why, a few days after my meeting with M. Hector Pessard, I called on the manager of the hotel where the Duchess was stopping—a man who was under some obligations to me and who always showed much deference toward me—in order to obtain some more detailed information as to the Duchess than M. Hector Pessard had given me.

The manager of the hotel put himself immediately at my disposal.

"The Duchess," said he, "has been here now for eleven months. There is evidently something a little mysterious about her, but I should not be telling the truth if I did not add that, apart from this instinctive and justifiable feeling that one has, there is nothing to say against her, and her entire bearing and attitude can give rise to no criticism. Five or

six days before her arrival a leading employee in a well-known bank came to choose the apartment for her which she now occupies. He took one on the third floor lest she should be troubled by the noise of the street. The apartment looks out on the Tuileries gardens and is composed of a drawing-room, dining-room, two bedrooms for her and her daughter, a "study," and three small rooms for her butler and her two lady's-maids who live on the same floor. On the first of the month the butler, who appears to be a highly respectable old servant, takes a check to the bank I have mentioned, and regularly on his return the Duchess settles her bills here. She has never kept us waiting a single day. Her *valet de pied*, who fulfills the general rôle of man servant, lives at the stables outside the hotel. The Duchess rarely goes out, receives only highly honorable visitors—men, it is true, rather than women, but men who, for the most part, are well known here as well as elsewhere. She shops a good deal, almost always in the same establishments. Her dressmakers are well known, and all that is brought to her she habitually pays for immediately. As she is regarded, owing to her long stay here and the regularity of her orders and payments, as a serious client, she has more than once asked for her bills before they were presented. I calculate, without having been guilty of any misplaced curiosity, that this lady must have more than 200,000 francs a year to spend, and all I hope is that she will stay on here as long as possible, for, I repeat, neither the prosperity nor respectability of the hotel has to regret her presence."

The next day I wrote to M. Pessard to tell him that I was at his disposal for any date he would like to fix, and on September 14, at four in the afternoon, I went with my friend to call on Madame Marsa Chamil, who had invited us to tea.

The Duchess answered completely to the portrait that M. Pessard had drawn of her. She rose, on my entrance, from the armchair where she was sitting, greeted me very amiably, and, without offering me her hand, but begging me to take a chair, began in the most natural way in the world to talk of the events of the day, of the crisis of May 16, 1877, the solution of which she had witnessed almost immediately on her arrival in Paris, and of the fall of M. Jules Simon, for whom she had a letter of introduction which she had refrained from presenting on learning that since his fall he had no inclination to receive strangers. She then talked of the statesmen whom I had seen at the Berlin Congress: of Count Andrassy, who was so characteristically the type of the Magyar race, nervous, breezy and hale, as if his ruddiness had been caught under the sun of his native forests; of Count von Haymerlé, so refined and elegant, subtile and active, but for whom people predicted a brief career because his incessant activity was like a tongue of fire that devoured his constitution; of Kara Théodori, the melancholy representative of a decadent Power, who had haunted the diplomatic *salons* of Berlin like a silent and furtive shade, keeping with a certain timidity in the background, the result both of his character and of the then shadowed and precarious interests that he represented. She then spoke to me of Prince Bismarck, whom she had certainly heard talk, for, quite naturally, in repeating a conversation which she had had she imitated, in a respectful but amusing way, his habit of stopping suddenly and without embarrassment, in the midst of a phrase, and of remaining quite silent until he had found the exact word which he wanted. She spoke to me finally, but with great discretion, without flattery and without exaggeration, of the rôle that I had played in Berlin and of certain episodes of my stay there, which would almost have led me to think that she had seen me in Berlin if I had not known that she had not quitted Paris for a whole year.

I was already in this first visit struck by the intellectual superiority of this woman who, during our conversation, had made use of several languages, which she seemed to know perfectly well, and which she spoke with an accent that belonged to none of them, without my being able exactly to discover to what nationality it was due. I saw perfectly well that this first visit would not be the last, for I felt from the outset for the Duchess, whom I had just seen for the first time, a really sympathetic curiosity; and I took a firm resolve, without any vulgar or hidden motive, to try to penetrate into her intimacy and to get at the meaning of the very real mystery, which, so to speak, floated in the ambient air attending her.

There had been on this occasion, besides M. Pessard and myself, three or four persons whom she knew that I was acquainted with and to whom, therefore, she did not feel obliged to introduce me; but, among two or three others, she presented to me a young man of easy and elegant manners and of real distinction as the Prince Karageorgevitch, and inasmuch as the question of the future Prince of Bulgaria was then being mooted, she added a few words appearing to indicate that the young man was regarded by some persons as among the candidates for that dignity. In a word, I took leave of the Duchess feeling that my visit had been one of the most interesting which I had made for some time. Thereupon I went to see her almost regularly for more or less long calls two or three times a week. I was more and more struck by her lofty intelligence, her good breeding, and by the accuracy of her opinions and reflections; and while noting that, in spite of my constant attention, I had not succeeded in piercing the somewhat impenetrable veil enveloping her, I remained convinced that I was dealing neither with an adventuress nor with a woman capable of a dishonest act; and my sympathy for her grew apace without my ignorance in regard to her being a whit diminished.

—DRIVEN ACROSS THE FRONTIER, WHICH WAS AT A DISTANCE OF ONLY NINE MILES

A Dinner with Alva and the Duchess

One evening, at about the month of December, when I had arrived somewhat late to call upon her and found her alone, she said to me:

"Let me introduce you to my dear child, Alva, whom you do not yet know, and, in order to become better acquainted with her, you will, if possible, share our dinner, for we are dining alone to-night."

At my movement of assent she rang and told Hugot, the butler, to go and ask Mademoiselle to come to her in the drawing-room. The introduction was brief, for Alva seemed to have been apprised fairly accurately in regard to the person introduced to her, and, contrary to the Duchess' custom, she immediately extended her hand in a cordial and almost familiar way. Alva was a great beauty, elegantly slender, of harmonious proportions, with hands and feet of perfect distinction, and she was dressed with refined and irreproachable simplicity. She possessed a delicate little head, a slightly brilliant complexion, a superb forehead, hair of the purest and waviest gold, and eyes of that greenish blue which characterizes the women of the North, and which, under eyebrows finely arched and beneath long brown lashes, seem readily to change their color and, according to the impressions they reflect, become now more azure-hued and now more profound.

Alva bade me welcome, and as it was late I asked to be allowed to return home in order to dress. At dinner the girl expressed herself in perfectly pure French without the slightest accent. She, too, knew English, German, Spanish and a little Russian. She had the inexperience of her age, for she was not yet eighteen, but she showed an exact and penetrating intelligence and a judgment both firm and indulgent. During dinner the Duchess told me that she had been informed during the day that the young man whom I had seen at her house, and whom she had called Prince Karageorgevitch, seemed indeed to bear that name, but in no way belonged to the princely family of Servian pretenders, which he claimed as his. I took this opportunity to tell her that she ought to be extremely circumspect, in the situation in which she was, as to the choice of her habitual guests, and that, without wishing to indicate them by name, there were among them certain persons who exercised rather an unfortunate impression on the judgment expressed in regard to her. She thanked me warmly and with that energy that always distinguished her told me, on my next visit, that she had shut her door to some of her habitual visitors, whose names she mentioned, which showed me she had very accurately judged the persons whom she was bound to exclude from her society.

In these pages I intend to relate an event the vicissitudes of which deserve to figure in my personal reminiscences, but I do not intend by analysis of details not directly bearing upon this story to lengthen needlessly the tale which I am now recounting. So I shall not speak of the successive visits which ensued, nor of the usual events that occurred during the three or four months following upon the first dinner of the Duchess at which I was present. What I can say, and am bound to say, is that my attachment for these two women grew apace as I came to know them, and rapidly became a veritable friendship. Both of them, each in her own way, were calculated to captivate. The one by the remarkable maturity of her lofty and cultivated intelligence, her upright bearing, her native penetration and the rare knowledge of men and things, of which for the most part she made no display, but which became evident whenever she took pains to analyze her thoughts; the other, Alva, by her springtime radiance, her eloquence and simplicity, her gentle and enticing melancholy, and by the intellectual precocity that broke forth luminously whenever, as was rare, she chanced to take part in the conversation.

At about the end of April, 1879, however, it seemed to me that a significant change was taking place in the existence of these two women. The mother was more nervous and irritable; more reserved than ever; she knit her brows; the quivering of her nostrils betrayed now and then her excitement; her lips, previously so full of smile, had strange twitchings, and she gave her orders more sharply and imperiously than was her wont. The girl, on such occasions, gave her mother an anxious and melancholy look, and more than once I beheld the corner of her lashes wet with a discreet and quickly suppressed tear. This change disturbed me, but such was the attitude of these two women that I should have held myself wanting in discretion to display the slightest anxiety. This state of things continued and even became more accentuated. It was, to be sure, purely a moral impression I had, for, apart from what I have noted, there had been no alteration in the Duchess' way of living. She received at the same hours, in the same conditions, offered and accepted the same acts of politeness, went out with the same style, did her shopping and errands as before, and, just as always, the hotel servants, when she came down into the courtyard to enter her brougham or her open carriage, bowed with the same respect on her passage. I was much perplexed by all this, and such was now my friendship for these two ladies that I could not help feeling a real anxiety, and I suffered at being kept in the dark as to what I felt to be their worries. This situation, which was so painful to me, went on into nearly the middle of June, and as I thought that now and then my visits caused a painful embarrassment I began to go less frequently, and, in spite of the real privation that I felt, I now remained at times almost a week without going to see the Duchess. Toward the middle of June, in one of the rare visits which I then made them, and when, by the cordiality of my words, I had tried to attenuate my indiscretion in coming to see them, the Duchess suddenly seemed to want to enter upon a conversation of a confidential character. She exclaimed:

"I must finally tell you ——"

Just then her eyes fell upon Alva. I cannot say what she read upon her face, but she stopped short, and, having become somewhat nervous, I got hastily up and took leave of her. As I crossed the hotel court the manager appeared in the doorway of his office, as if wanting to speak to me. I went to meet him and he asked me into his room. He shut the door and said:

"You must excuse me, sir, for what I am going to tell you, but a few months ago, before knowing the Duchess, you asked

for accurate information in regard to her, which I gave you; and since then, as I see and know, you have become in the eyes of the Duchess and her daughter the real friend of the house. I feel bound then to tell you, for it seems to me to be a duty, that during the last two months certain things have been going on here which will perhaps seem to you, as they do to me, disquieting. Ever since the first of May this lady has neither asked for nor settled her hotel bill, which amounts to-day to about eighteen thousand francs. She has made many purchases and, contrary to her wont, has not paid for them immediately, but has even sent back some of the bills presented to ask for a delay, and, if I am not mistaken, the Duchess during the two and a half months in which this change has been taking place must have become indebted to the extent of more than fifty thousand francs, for, as always happens, she has bought some new things in order to defer payment on those for which she already owes. I should even add that for some time now I see hovering about the hotel personages who appear to be on the lookout; that I have received the visit of an official who came to make a detailed inquiry as to the Duchess and her daughter; that this lady's servants appear worried, and that it seems to me I ought to inform you of all this lest you be surprised by some event which might annoy you."

It will readily be understood that I was impressed and disturbed by this communication. I passed a bad night, and the next morning wrote to the Duchess asking her to receive me at three o'clock.

At three o'clock, in fact, I was at her house. I was ushered in and found her alone. With a good deal of precaution and considerable apprehension I explained to her that I felt it my duty to repeat to her what the manager of the hotel had said to me. She heard me in silence. Two big tears ran down her cheeks.

The Narrative of the Maid of Honor

"What the manager of the hotel has told you," said she, after a pause, "is true. For three months now I have been completely without funds. I thought, and still think, that I shall get my money back. I had not wished to change my way of living nor my expenses. In the first place, from a mere matter of pride, which you will understand; secondly, not to alarm Alva. But the time has come to tell you what you do not now know, and what on more than one occasion I had intended to tell you, without daring to get to the end. Among all the persons I have known you are the one who has shown me the most serious, the most sincere and the most disinterested sympathy; and you are the one in whom Alva and I feel the most confidence and for whom we cherish the greatest friendship. I am going, therefore, to tell you everything, and you will then judge whether you should respond to the appeal which I shall make you.

"Alva, whom I call my child, is not my daughter. She belongs to a royal house, she is the daughter of a Princess, and the reason for the ducal crown being on everything belonging to us here is that most of these objects come from her mother, and that Alva, in reality, if not by right, can claim this crown. She was born when her mother was but eighteen years old. Her mother was as beautiful as she, and Alva is her speaking likeness. Her father was a Captain in an Austrian regiment garrisoned in the Germanic confederation. I was her lady of honor. When I learned of the affair her suffering attached me to her more than ever, and after having become her *confidante* I became her accomplice. We wept long over the situation together. Finally an idea came to me that lighted up the whole situation, and I felt that I had found a way of saving her, I will even say of saving us, for, if the truth became known, I was in as much danger as she, and perhaps even more. Without telling her my plan I went to one of the Court physicians whom I admired exceedingly. Unhesitatingly, and after he had promised to keep my disclosure a secret, I told him all I knew.

"Doctor Alven—this is the name we shall give him, for it was under this name later that he took all the steps that devolved upon him—Doctor Alven listened in silence, and, when I had done, said:

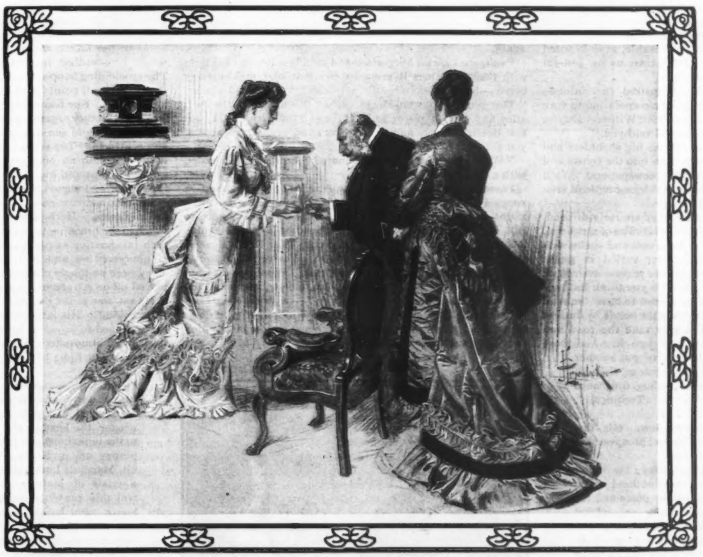
"'Say to Madame that she must not appear to-night at dinner; that she must go to bed and complain of violent headaches and of great difficulty in breathing. Then, to-morrow morning early let her send for me to come and see her. Do not worry; I hope that I shall find a way to save you both.'

"Doctor Alven had her take a potion, as a consequence of which the unfortunate Princess' face became violently red and a heavy fever ensued. Our rescuer submitted her to this treatment for two weeks. He directed me to stay with her, because she wanted to be cared for only by me, and two weeks later, the Court meanwhile having been greatly alarmed, and, with the exaggeration habitual in such cases, her death having been announced, on the sixteenth day, at Doctor Alven's request, and by order of the Sovereign, there was a consultation of doctors, the Princess' father being present. The doctors adopted Doctor Alven's proposal, declaring that the only way of saving the Princess was first sending her away to the south of France, and secondly, at the advice of a young doctor whom Alven undertook to name, to have her travel in Algeria, Cairo, the Canary Islands and the Balearic Isles.

"Doctor Alven declared that he would give the Princess certain potions which, in spite of her weak state, would enable her to start, and lest too much stir be made as to the illness by which she was menaced, said she must leave without any sort of ostentation and travel incognito.

"Doctor Alven's plans were adopted, and we set out three days later in the evening, in the most favorable circumstances possible, accompanied by Hugot, the butler, who is still with me, by the young doctor who left us a little later, and by the two lady's-maids who are still in our service.

"We betook ourselves immediately to one of the properties belonging to the Princess beyond the frontier, a domain which came to her direct from one of her aunts. She had had it at her disposal only quite recently, having only a short time before come into her legal majority, and on that occasion the personal advice of her father had reduced by half the personal appanage which she enjoyed.



—SHE IMMEDIATELY EXTENDED HER HAND IN A CORDIAL WAY

"On reaching our destination the Princess sent for the official who governed the district, and the functionary who dealt with all matters pertaining to the attestation of contracts. In their presence the Princess had an act drawn up in which she authorized her steward, assisted by the governor of the district, to transfer, upon an order signed by her, her entire property, and to convert the sum thus obtained into paper, consols, government annuities, municipal bonds and railway shares, according to Doctor Alven's indications. All this property, when realized, was, at the Princess' orders, to be intrusted by the governor of the district and the steward acting together to the person indicated by the Princess in the two orders which she proposed to send them.

"I will not needlessly lengthen out this story. We made all the peregrinations that had been planned for us, until finally the Princess was conducted into a Hungarian convent, the Superior of which was a sister of Doctor Alven. The Princess and I were installed with our servants and the doctor in a cottage at a remote corner of the convent park, where there was a private entrance, and where we lived well removed from curious eyes, even from those of the nuns. As the convent was the seat of the head of the Order, and sent out its nuns on missions in all directions, whenever one of them left she was ordered, on reaching her destination, to post letters for the Court, making it to be supposed that we were still on our travels.

The Return to Court

"When the young doctor left us to return to the Court, he announced to the Princess' father that the Princess, now completely recovered, was coming home. The child, a girl, was inscribed on the convent registers simply under the name of Alva, the Princess herself having chosen the name out of gratitude to Doctor Alven. The Superior chose a nurse for her, and a few months later nurse and child were introduced into the convent, the latter passing for a daughter of a niece of the Superior.

"My dear and unfortunate mistress wept her heart out when she was told that she must live separated from her child. I did my best to console her, promising that she should see her shortly and that, with Alven's aid, we should return before long to the convent.

"Two months later, early in 1862, we returned to the Court. No one there had had the slightest suspicion of what had occurred. The young doctor had said nothing from professional duty. The devotion of the three servants amounted to heroism, and Doctor Alven avoided any step that could have given rise to a suspicion of there being anything special between him and us.

"Eleven years went by thus. It had been impossible to undertake the journey which the Princess so longed to make. Alva had been separated from her nurse, and she continued to be educated at the convent in the most perfect manner possible. She was adored there, all the nuns doing their best to contribute to her intellectual and physical development.

"Great political changes had taken place meanwhile. Austria had come forth from the Germanic confederation. The war of 1870 to 1871 had altogether modified the confederated sovereignties of Germany. The Princess, who possessed a fairly important appanage, as well as, as I have said, the property abroad which she had inherited from one of her aunts, was more eager than ever to realize her property, which, thus transformed into paper, had a value of more than five millions of francs, and she was bent on quitting her country and taking refuge with Alva in a foreign land where it would be impossible to force her to return.

"Alas! just then a terrible misfortune befell us. Our presence in the convent, which we had fancied absolutely unknown to any one, had been witnessed by the gardener, the guardian of the park, who never penetrated into the convent, but who lived in a small house at the other extremity of the grounds, a house which, like our own, possessed an independent entrance. His attention had been drawn to what went on in our cottage. He had played the spy and discovered everything save our identity.

"Unfortunately one of the nuns, who had been sent out of the convent on a mission and had imperfectly understood her instructions as regards posting one of the Princess' letters, intrusted it to the gardener whom she met as she was leaving. He, suspecting that there was some relation between this letter and the mystery of the cottage, did not hesitate an instant at the infamy of reading the letter; and the address, the

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XUM

—THERE WAS NO QUIET IN HER HEART

THE AMATEUR

THE FIGHT FOR THE COMO FRANCHISE. HOW THE AMATEUR BROKE THE DEADLOCK

By Will Payne

I

PASSMORE came in cheerfully and shut the door. "Well, he called our bluff; the franchise was repealed last night," he said almost gayly, and with a deep bass gurgle of laugh.

"Yes," said Longwell grimly. His tanned young face, with the belligerent dent in the square chin and the stubborn wisp of black hair over the square brow, did not respond to his companion's merriment. His dark eyes looked gloomy. "He's got old man Willits with him—the miserable, gray-bearded old goat. I suppose Trumbull voted against us on general principles—unless he's a thief, too."

"Oh, no," said Passmore with unimpaired cheerfulness. "Trumbull couldn't help voting against a corporation to save his life. It's Tommy Dolan and old man Willits—they're the boys we've got to deal with, just as I told you."

The younger man suddenly squared his big shoulders and struck the table with his fist. "We'll go into the courts and fight 'em, Passmore! We'll go into the newspapers! We'll fight 'em to the last ditch! To be ruined by a couple of miserable thieves! . . . . I won't stand it!"

Passmore was thirty-seven, slender, very spruce ly dressed, with a thin, colorless face and hair and eyebrows of a neutral, dusty shade. He looked calmly at Longwell and spoke with the low, quiet voice which scarcely ever varied in pitch: "That will take perhaps two, perhaps five years—even if we win out at the end of the litigation. Do you think Bullen's going to carry us that long when we agreed to have the road in operation so he could begin to market the bonds by the first of next November? Bullen will simply take the road and scoop in the $85,000 that we've put into it. And those improvements in the addition that we've put another $25,000 into will fall to pieces before you're through with your lawsuit. Besides, the repealing ordinance will probably be sustained in the courts. Technically, we had forfeited the franchise."

The young man turned to the window. His lips closed stubbornly, but it was a very dismal prospect that his gloomy, speculative eyes reviewed.

Out at Oakhurst, eighteen miles away, his father owned three hundred and twenty acres of land which was too near the city for agricultural purposes and too far away for urban use. Besides, the transportation was poor. The C. & G. N. ran through Oakhurst—which had been Peter's Crossing until the pride of the city a little overtook it—but it had no competition and little effort had been made to build up suburban residence communities out that way. So the road charged a high fare and gave a poor service. It was Passmore, who had made a suburban town on the C. & W. and brought out a subdivision at Mapleview, who suggested Longwell's addition to Oakhurst, with all modern improvements and grand sales of lots on easy payments. He proposed a partnership, each raising half of the money for the improvements. But better transportation was necessary, and they organized the Chicago and Oakhurst Electric Railway to build twelve miles of trolley road, connecting with the city lines at the city limits. The Chicago and Oakhurst would run through the villages of Trier, Weston, Como, Ridgeland and Oakhurst. They got a franchise from each of these villages, agreeing to complete the road within a year; and they began to build from both ends at once, themselves raising forty per cent. of the cost and borrowing sixty per cent. from Bullen with whom they hypothecated all the bonds and stock of the road. Longwell, to whom the details fell, pushed the construction as energetically as he had played football at Ann Arbor. But the mills were slow with the rails; the wire was not delivered on time. A mile and a half in the middle, running through the village of Como, was not finished within the year. They asked the village trustees for an extension of time. It was then that Trustee Tommy Dolan, proprietor of Dolan's Inn and Picnic Grove—otherwise roadhouse and beer garden—permitted it to leak out to the promoters that the price would be $2000. When Longwell understood it, he offered to kick the emissary downstairs. Then the Como board of trustees passed an ordinance repealing the franchise of the Chicago and Oakhurst Electric Railway, Dolan and old man Willits, who ran a flour and feed store, and Trumbull, a printer, voting aye; Doctor Agnew and Knox, the lawyer, voting no.

Thus the Chicago and Oakhurst Electric Railway had ten miles of road with a mile-and-a-half hole in the middle—about as valuable, as things stood, as so much junk; and Longwell and Passmore had $25,000 worth of fine modern improvements that were likely to serve no more profitable purpose than to amuse the Oakhurst wiseacres.

It was young Longwell's project. His father had opposed it until the young man's impatient persistence overcame him. The $60,000 of Longwell money involved was not much; but it was all they had. The land had been mortgaged for the enterprise. To young Longwell's gloomy eyes it looked like a clean sweep; and there were his father, his grandfather, Aunt Mary—and his wife.

"It's infamous! A couple of dirty rascals!" he burst out again.

Passmore took off his glasses and calmly scratched his nose with them. "Does it seem to you that that makes it any better—because they're dirty rascals?" he asked coolly. "The gentleman who meets you at the mouth of the dark alley and puts a pistol to your head is a dirty rascal; but that doesn't change anything. You hand over your watch or you get your brains blown out."

"What do you propose, Passmore?" Longwell demanded with a touch of belligerence.

Passmore smiled as though the simplicity of the question amused him. "Why, my dear fellow, there's only one thing to do—hand over your watch. It doesn't do you any good to call names with a bullet in your head or if you're broke. We made the bluff. It was a good one. But Dolan's called it, and we haven't a leg to stand on. You're bound to run against fellows of that stripe at times. What do you want to do—throw the thing up, lose your money, go home and say you're beaten and busted? Why"—with his eyeglasses he made a little gesture toward the window—"you don't suppose all this can go on without more or less of handing over your watch all the time?"

"GO MAKE MUD PIES"

That high window looked into a vast well, the bottom of which was made by the roof of a seven-story building below and two sides by the bare, towering flanks of two skyscrapers. The open side of the well gave a long diagonal view down to the sunlit street thronged with traffic. Everything suggested a vast activity which produced money. Its captains were men of power, not men of scruples. This sense of power again filled the young man's brain. To do something; to accomplish something; not to fumble and hesitate and fail!

"I suppose I can make Dolan and Willits a loan of a thousand each," he said with a bitter dryness.

"Yes, as a sign of your regard, dear boy," said Passmore, with his rare gurgle of deep bass laughter.

II

IT WAS very pleasant at Oakhurst. Marshall Longwell's house was the sort a prosperous farmer would be likely to build—an upright part and an L, two stories high, of frame. A deep porch ran along the L, looking over the wide front yard where some rose bushes were in bloom. The wood across the street, which was here no more than a country road, stood tall and thick as it had grown. A whippoorwill called in its depths. The chorus of the frogs at the river pulsed peacefully in the wide, bland summer night. The spacious air, bearing the scent of growing things and a pleasant damp as of dew, moved so serenely it seemed impossible that the gigantic activity of Chicago was only a few miles away.

Marshall Longwell sat on the porch smoking with a calm contemplation, now and then lifting his hand to the thick, close-cropped iron-gray beard which framed his face. Not a word was spoken, but once or twice Longwell glanced down at his daughter-in-law who sat on the steps to the porch leaning against a pillar. She, too, looked off to the quiet wood. But there was no quiet in her heart. She was deeply unhappy.

She knew a kind of invincible stubbornness in her husband. He was not a man to be afraid. She had never liked the too successful Mr. Passmore—that colorless, imperturbable man who proposed to make their fortune, producing it out of a cornucopia like a conjuror. She early caught the clashes between the father and son. She secretly hoped the father would be steadfast in opposing Passmore's golden project. Then something happened. She knew that Marshall Longwell gave way at all points, and Herbert went plunging into his big scheme. She feared; but for a long time it was not so bad. When they organized the street railway Herbert let her be secretary, and she signed her name under his to numberless contracts. The room in the corner of the L, off the hall, was made into an office, with a desk, a typewriter, a small safe, and maps and blue-prints. She wrote the letters on the typewriter and signed them as secretary.

But that had changed. The office and typewriter were not fun any more. Herbert was vague about the business. She watched the brooding in his eyes; observing, putting together such information as came to her. Something ominous in the air oppressed her, and she knew that Herbert had set her aside. They were no longer chums over the business. The man had moved off on a track of his own.

He sat now at the end of the porch, a pipe in his hand, but not smoking. His large, unchanging figure in the pleasant dusk seemed to brood, to hold itself watchfully still, to enfold itself in an atmosphere which excluded them. May wished to go to him; but his stubborn shoulders seemed to forbid it.

Marshall Longwell smoked on, with that contemplative serenity, and his serenity was painful to May. He seemed insensible and weak. He was the father and master, the head of the house; yet he had given way to the impetuous and inexperienced son; had let Herbert plunge on, involving them in liabilities. More than all, Marshall Longwell must know, as May knew, that a crisis of sinister character impended. He must feel this presence in the somber atmosphere of the house. But he did nothing. He sat by, calmly smoking. His head, framed in its iron-gray hair and beard, looked powerful, leonine; but he must be weak.

Herbert arose abruptly. May's nerves started and her heart began to beat faster, although she could not have said why. She sprang up as he came down the porch with his heavy tread.

"Going for a walk, dear?" she asked, with a faint, vaguely anxious little smile. She touched his arm with her hand, very lightly, and almost as by an inadvertence swayed gently against him, looking up.

He saw perfectly the fine, upturned face, with beautiful lips, and soft dark hair combed down to the ears; and in a dull, remote way the graceful, pretty appeal thrilled him.

Nevertheless he said, "No; going to work. I expect callers on business," and she saw that his eyes were heavy as lead. He strode into the house.

She stood by the front door while he went down the hall, entered the office and closed the door after him. Then she could no longer contain herself. The restraint which she had thought it dutiful to impose upon herself broke down. She ran around the corner of the house and made her way swiftly but noiselessly through the shrubbery. A horse and buggy had been hitched to the back fence and two men were entering the little door in the angle of the L which opened directly to the office. The lamplight shone upon them, so that she saw the burly figure, florid face and heavy black mustache of the one and the frail form and long white beard of the other.

She stood a moment in the shrubbery. The hurried pumping of her heart was audible in her ears, and in her shocked brain there whirled a vague, taunting sense of the wide, serene, indifferent summer night. She was mightily afraid, and an inextinguishable shame invaded her on every side. She ran back to the house, up the steps, and put her hand on Marshall Longwell's shoulder.

"Father," she whispered, panting, "they're in there with Bert—that man Dolan and another trustee."

Longwell's deep blue eyes looked at her strained face with affection. He nodded. "I suppose so," he replied.

He spoke so kindly and calmly that for a moment the thing seemed commonplace; an innocent, matter-of-course business meeting; as though the horrid shape in the dark had suddenly emerged as a familiar and harmless figure.

But the fear was planted too strongly. The force of all the circumstances returned. That ominous and brooding air which she had felt about her husband reimposed upon her. "I'm afraid!" she whispered, in a kind of wail, like a terrified child.

The elderly man's eyes still looked most kindly at her. With a bent knuckle he smoothed his thick iron-gray mustache. Again he nodded. "I guess it's not for any good they're here," he said.

In a way this seemed the worst, the most intolerable, the most maddening of all things—this calm supineness, this immovable flaccidity.

She straightened up. Her dark eyes flashed. Her prettily modeled nostrils dilated. "And you will do nothing?" She spoke aloud now, in a low tone that vibrated with anger. "You are the head of the house. It's your money. You are responsible. It's your own flesh and blood. You know what Passmore's been doing with him. You know how headstrong he is. You let him rush on; and now you will do nothing? You will not interfere?"

He smiled gravely, and shook his head. "I will not interfere any more," he said in the same kind tone. "Some men are so stubborn that only the Almighty can teach them."

It seemed a mere idle phrase. "Very well! I shall interfere!" she said. "I am going into that room!"

"If you think best, May," he acquiesced gently.

"I am going!" She whirled to the door.

When Tommy Dolan and old man Willits entered the office they sat down at the small table, while Longwell stood against the wall regarding them with eyes which cold and concentrated passion made dull and heavy as lead. The bit was between his teeth and he was going ahead.

"Fine place you got here, Mr. Longwell," said Dolan cheerfully. He was burly, florid, with heavy black mustache—a mere cunning, conscienceless, shameless brute. Longwell felt the profoundest contempt for him.

"Fine country. Ought 'o make fine addition," old man Willits seconded; but his thin, old voice quavered and broke pitifully. The trembling of his nerves was apparent in his hands and in his head which shook slightly. He had sparse, dirty-looking gray hair and a long, twisted, dirty-looking gray beard which his bony hand kept stroking. His small, pale eyes and thin nose had a pinched, cold look. His vest was unbuttoned and his shirt-front was soiled and wrinkled. Longwell could not keep his eyes off this abject, tremulous old creature.

"You came to see about that little loan, I suppose," said Longwell with firm curtness.

"The little loan, Mr. Longwell. Old Billy 'n' me's pretty hard up in our business. We got to get a little lift from some friend," said Dolan easily.

Longwell perceived that the old man could not speak. He felt a disgust so profound that it was a sort of nausea.

When May came to the door she found it locked, and beat upon it, calling, "Bert! Bert! It's I—May! I want to see you!"

There was no delay. Her husband opened the door at once. She perceived that the room was empty save for him, and the outer door was open. She felt also that Marshall Longwell was coming up behind her. Then she looked into her husband's face and saw that his heavy eyes were regarding herself and his father without a touch of surprise, as though these two figures had floated up inevitably out of the stream of things.

He took two steps backward into the room and sat down on the corner of the table, his big figure humped over, and he still looked at them as though it was quite inevitable they should have come at that moment.

"I couldn't do it," he said simply and with a kind of innocent confusion. "The money's in the safe there; but I couldn't do it—couldn't give it to them. It was Willits—that old gray goat. His bony hand kept trembling at his dirty white whiskers. He kept licking his lips and looking at me like a scared dog. I knew he had come here to take the money. But he was so disgusting and pitiful, licking his lips and shivering, that"—he gave a big sigh which was mostly a sort of resigned content—"I just made up my mind I'd rather say I was beaten and lose the money."

IT PITCHED US OUT AND THE WAGON UPSET

Marshall Longwell stood in front of his son and nodded his head. "You'll do, son," he said; "you've come out. You're fit to have a wife." He looked down with his quiet, kind smile at the graceful figure beside him, and laid his big hand on her shoulder. "It's hard for May to understand, but I know. That stubbornness 's in the blood, daughter."

Looking down at her, and speaking rather to her than to Herbert, he passed his free hand over his leonine mane; and the young woman suddenly comprehended a great passion under his quiet air, so that she waited, without knowing why.

"I had the strength of three ordinary men," he said. "I used to kill my horses working them so hard, because I was bound to get ahead and get things done. It made me mad if anything got in the way. We moved out here to this place when we were married. I started in to clear the timber-land west. Sometimes, in a rage because the horses were tired out by six o'clock, I dragged tree-trunks aside myself. Things went so slow. I carried a lot of the lumber for this house on my back at night. She—Herbert's mother—had been used to living better than we Longwells had ever lived, and I wanted to get the house built for her right away. One day I took her and drove into the city to buy some furniture. Chicago was a small place then compared with what it is now. There wasn't any street railroad except one or two little horse-car lines. It was in the spring and there was a freshet. The Desplaines was 'way over its banks. We drove through water up to the hub going in that morning. We left the city about four o'clock. I was in a hurry to get home because I expected a man from Lake County to come in that evening and close up a deal for some timber that was important to me. When we got pretty well out this way we met a man who had turned back. He said the water was over the bridge and nobody could get across. But I drove on. I had a good team and a strong democrat wagon, and I wasn't going back. The water was half a mile out of the river-bed, but the bridge was standing all right. It was well anchored. Some water was running across the floor of it. I drove on and got pretty well up to the bridge. The water was running to the horses' bodies by that time, so strong it was hard for them to stand against it. It was muddy and ugly with foam on it where it eddied. She was a brave woman. She hadn't done a thing to- then—just sat still on the seat beside me, but I knew she was white. The horses stopped and flung up their heads and kind of backed up in fright. Then she caught my arm. 'Go back, dear,' she said. The water gave a little lift to the wagon-box as though it was testing its strength against it. She put her hand to her face. She was crying."

He lifted his hands and pressed them to his bearded cheeks, with a motion which even his will could not restrain.

"Right there the road should have begun to slant up to the bridge so that higher ground would be just ahead. I wasn't going back. I stood up and swore and hit the horses a lick with the end of the lines. They lunged forward and the wheels dropped on one side where the road had gullied out. It pitched us out and the wagon upset, and the box floated off, turning around and around in the current. I got hold of her and got her on the wagon-box; but when the box swung around it whirled her under the trees on the bank and the branches swept her off, with me downstream from her. I shouted to her to hang on to the branches, and she did, and I tried to swim back to her, but no man could swim against that current. It carried me away. The willow branches were too limber to hold her. It was just her face close to the muddy water looking at me for a minute. It only lasted a minute, but sometimes, right now, it seems to have lasted always. We found her body the next day."

He brushed a bit of lint from his sleeve. The two young faces were turned intently to his, and in the pause they felt his lifelong passion as though it visibly rolled by them like that flood he had pictured—something huge, fateful, Sophoclean.

Herbert's throat was dry and his eyeballs suddenly smarted. He reached out his arm for his wife.

"My God! How clear it is!" he muttered.

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FOR once Passmore's dry good humor failed him. He was thoroughly out of patience and he showed it.

"I knew you were an amateur, Longwell," he said testily; "but I didn't know before that you were a fool and a traitor."

It showed how deeply Passmore was moved, because it was usually unsafe to make remarks of this sort to Herbert Longwell, and while Passmore's face turned white and wrinkled with anger, he still got himself on the other side of the table out of the reach of a long arm before he relieved his mind.

But as it happened Longwell only tipped back his head and laughed with a kind of boyish joy. "Of course, I knew you'd be sore, Passmore," he said brightly; "because you're disappointed. But the thing is settled."

"Settled!" Passmore snapped. "Settled! Why, we stand to lose everything. Can't you understand! We're as good as out of the game right now. You must be crazy."

"Oh, no, I'm not crazy, Passmore. I never knew better, or so well, what I'm about." The younger man smiled up openly at the elder. "I was mixed up for a bit. I admit that. But it's just like A B C now. I may lose all the money and bust the family higher'n Gilroy's kite, but I'm not going to be a rascal. That's simple enough, isn't it?"

"You're an ass!"

Again Longwell laughed with a frank relish.

Passmore bit his lip. "See here. Do you think I'm going to stand for this? Do you think I'm going to let a fool amateur piddle away sixty-five thousand dollars of my money? If you do, you've got something more to learn."

"I don't want you to lose your money, Passmore. And I don't want to lose my money. I mean to do everything I can to prevent it. I've told you that I'm going to see Trumbull. He's a crank, but he's an honest man. I'm just going to put the thing before him as it is, and ask him if he's going to stand in with a couple of sandbaggers."

Passmore looked down with cold contempt. "Pish! Go make mud pies. Go play with a doll. You ought to be out with a little red wagon and the fire shovel playing at building forts on the beach, with your hair curled and panties on!"

Longwell's only answer was, "Nobody's going to be bribed."

"I'll buy your interest; I'll buy you out," said Passmore decisively. "I'll give you forty thousand dollars. That's a mighty sight more than it's worth as things stand."

XUM

Longwell shook his head. "I won't sell to you."

"Very well. I'll have Bullen step in and take the property. He can do it the first of November anyway, and I guess he can get action quicker if it's shown the thing is going to pot. I've done business with Bullen before," he added menacingly.

"I suppose I can't help myself with Bullen, finally," said Longwell thoughtfully. "We owe him the money and he can foreclose. But he won't foreclose until I've had a try with my plan—or else he'll foreclose into a mighty big row and lawsuit. I don't care a rap what you say; I'm going to try Trumbull."

"Pish! Pish!" said Passmore.

Nevertheless, Longwell persisted. He found the printer in his small pine dry-goods-box of a house at Como, and he found a sensible-looking wife and two healthy youngsters which he took as a good sign.

Trumbull himself was a fleshy young man, with a great deal of hair, steel-bowed spectacles and a serious air. He had a way of compressing his lips, thrusting out his chin and cracking the table with his knuckles when he talked. This, Longwell admitted, was not so good a sign.

"A few of us here in Como, Mr. Longwell, have made a strong fight against granting any public-services franchises of any kind to any corporation," he said. "It's true we haven't any street railroad or any gas or water or telephone service. But we've kept the way open for municipal ownership when the State constitution is amended and the necessary laws passed and Como gets to a point where its credit will support an issue of bonds—provided, of course, the city doesn't annex us before that time, which now seems probable. I opposed your franchise in the first place, and I don't see why I shouldn't oppose it now. What you tell me is pretty tough, I admit. But there's a principle at stake."

"The franchise was granted, you know," Longwell urged, "and we spent a great deal of money on the strength of it. We tried our best to complete the work in time. We have shown perfect good faith. Is it good faith for the village to put us in the position of facing ruin or giving up to a couple of sandbaggers whom the village elected?"

"Well"— Trumbull considered —"there's force in what you say. I detest the sandbaggers as much as you do. It exasperates me that you can never get those fellows on the hip where you can prove a case against them. You are in a hard position, and I don't know but under the circumstances you're entitled to a new franchise. I'll study it over."

Longwell went over it with his wife and father. "I don't know," he said. "Trumbull may vote for us. Of course we can count on Agnew and Knox." He smiled slightly. "I shall be mighty happy if it comes out right. Otherwise"—he stopped in the act of swallowing and his voice shook a little—"it will be pretty tough on you, father."

"Nothing's going to be tough on me, my boy," said Marshall Longwell. "If I wish to keep the money it's on your account and May's."

"Well—as for May"—he looked down at her. "It would be hard luck. But we're young. We can start over."

She slipped her hand within his and rubbed her cheek against his sleeve. "What do we care?" she said.

Still when Monday came there was a tension on their nerves. This was to be the last meeting of the Como trustees before September. The new ordinance would be introduced. Agnew and Knox would support it. Dolan and Willits, of course, would oppose it. Everything depended upon Trumbull. As the trustees would at once adjourn for the summer it would be necessary for the Chicago and Oakhurst Railway to formally accept the ordinance immediately after its passage. Longwell and his wife, as president and secretary of the company, were to attend the meeting, prepared to affix their official signatures.

The trustees met in the bare, atticlike room, lighted by kerosene lamps, over Willits' flour and feed store. A score of villagers dropped in to watch the proceedings. Longwell and May sat on a bench against the roughly plastered wall.

HERBERT LONGWELL

Doctor Agnew came over and spoke to them cheerfully. Knox bowed. Tommy Dolan favored them with a rough stare. Old man Willits shuffled by without looking at them and took the seat at the corner of the long table, his eyes downcast, his bony hand fumbling nervously in his dirty-looking gray whiskers. They waited for Trumbull. The fleshy young man came in late, strode resolutely to the table, dropped his hat on the floor and sat down, presenting a broad, fat back to Longwell, who frowned slightly in the nerve-trying suspense, and to May, who clasped her hands lightly in her lap.

There was a good deal of routine business. Then the ordinance of the Chicago and Oakhurst Electric Railway was brought up. The case was perfectly understood and there was no speech-making. In a moment the clerk prepared to call the roll. The frown deepened on Longwell's face and May felt the painfully hurried beating of her heart.

"Agnew."

"I vote aye," said the doctor.

"Dolan."

"No," said Tommy promptly.

"Knox."

"Aye."

"Trumbull."

May took a long breath, and Longwell saw the printer's chin thrust forward.

"No," said Trumbull decisively.

That settled it. Longwell's eyes fell, and he felt May leaning lightly against his shoulder with an attempt at comfort. It was ended.

The clerk called, "Willits."

The old man's tremulous, laboring voice was scarcely audible as he said, "I vote aye."

"Huh?" said Trustee Dolan incredulously, aloud. The clerk suspended his pencil as though he might not have heard aright.

"Aye; I vote aye," said old man Willits, hardly above a whisper. The clerk recorded it. "The ayes have it; the ordinance is passed," said Doctor Agnew.

Longwell looked around at his wife, his mouth open, astonished, quite at a loss for a moment.

TOMMY DOLAN

"Oh—it's passed, Bert!" she whispered joyously.

They had to go forward to sign the acceptance. Doctor Agnew shook hands with them and congratulated them. Trumbull came up, smiling grimly. "Well, I did my best against you, as a matter of principle," he said, "but I can't say I'm sorry you won"—he looked Longwell in the eye—"for I believe you won honestly."

Longwell could laugh with good humor. Everything had come out right. They could not help being gay.

An outside pair of stairs led down the side of the two-story frame building. Finally, Doctor Agnew, Longwell and May came down these stairs, exuberantly happy, the others having gone before. A side door under the stairs led into Willits' little flour and feed store. When they reached the foot of the stairs they saw the old man fumbling at the lock of this door, about to enter the store. The happy impulse moved most spontaneously in Mrs. Longwell. She tripped forward impetuously.

"Oh, Mr. Willits!—I don't know—perhaps it isn't quite proper to thank a trustee for his vote. But we were so happy because you voted for us. Indeed, the company will do all it has promised. You won't mind if I thank you!"

She was shaking the old man's bony hand, and Herbert Longwell stood over them, beaming, Doctor Agnew smiling in the background.

"I want to thank you, too, Mr. Willits. I was ready to lose, you know. But this is a good deal better. And—it was fine of you. I know that."

The trustee's hand trembled at his beard. He smiled wanly and deprecatingly. "I was pretty hard pressed, Mr. Longwell," he said tremulously. "A man, maybe, is driven until he'll do things he oughtn't to—until he

OLD MAN WILLITS

stops to think. I was pretty hard pressed, with poor business, and expenses in the family—my son being married—and a debt to Dolan. I'm a ruined man, as I stand; but, thank God, it came out right."

"Ruined? How ruined, now, Willits?"

"With expenses and poor business and a debt to Dolan—a thousand dollars would—was what I needed. But never mind."

"Mind? Of course I'll mind. Look here, I'm not going to have you ruined for lack of a little money. I owe you something. A loan now. See here—it's all open between us and I'm your friend. A loan now. What do you want?"

"Why, Mr. Willits! You must let us be your friends. You've been our friend," said May eagerly. . . .

In good fortune, unpleasantnesses ought to be forgotten. So Longwell recited the events of the trustees' meeting gayly to Passmore, and Passmore himself was restored to his blandest equanimity.

"So I've arranged to lend the poor old fellow a thousand dollars. I'll charge it to expense account if he can't pay," said Longwell exuberantly.

"What!" Passmore shouted. "What? A thousand dollars!" And the calm man flung himself back in the chair and gave way to irresistible laughter. "Well, of all the amateurs! Was it the same thousand dollars you'd prepared to lend him before?"

"Huh? Huh?" Longwell demanded, confused at the other's hilarity. "What are you talking about?"

"Oh! Oh!—of all the amateurs. You were going to lend him a thousand dollars to vote aye. And now he has voted aye and you lend him a thousand dollars! Longwell, you're funnier than a circus!"

Longwell stared for a moment while his confused mind groped for the point. He laughed a little feebly. Then he came to himself.

"Oh, you be dog-goned, Passmore! What do I care about that? You may say it looks the same. But whatever I do with a good will and a free conscience I can't be bluffed out of. Say, can't I look my wife in the face when she knows this? Why, man, she did it! You be dog-goned!"

Still Passmore laughed. "It's the day of the amateurs," he said.

The Triumph of the Boomers

THE white settlers in the arid regions of the West, driven well-nigh to desperation by the failure of their crops year after year, looked upon the Indian Territory as a veritable Land of Promise. Men were continually going in surreptitiously, and their persistent efforts obtained for them the name of "boomers."

This struggle between aboriginal ownership and white ambition for possession went on for a long while, but finally the claims of the Indians were disregarded, and it was declared that on a certain day Oklahoma would be thrown open to the settlers.

There gathered on the boundary-line of Oklahoma a motley army, waiting for the word to rush into and occupy the vast area newly opened. All along the boundary-line was a picket-line of cavalry on horseback, waiting to give the noon-signal for the opening of the Land of Promise. And when the rattling fire of musketry began and ran along the border-line for mile after mile there ensued the most wonderful spectacle of its kind that has ever been witnessed.

And, as horseman raced with horseman, and wagon with wagon, there sprang up, miles ahead, men who raced on foot. These were men to whom, as an emergency term, was given the name of "sooners." Familiar with the territory that was to be opened, they had concealed themselves in the brush, ready to take an unfair advantage when the signal for the invasion was given.

Within forty-eight hours after the opening of the Territory the new towns were built. Then came the contest between the Government towns and the railroad towns. The railroads began by refusing to stop trains at the Government towns, and the citizens of the latter, being driven to extremes, undertook to hold up the trains with shotguns and thus compel them to stop. Then the railroads ran heavier locomotives, and it became the custom of the engineers to lie down in their cabs at dangerous points to avoid a fusillade of buckshot. Obstructions were placed on the tracks, and there arose a condition of anarchy which was done away with, eventually, by requiring the trains to stop at both Government towns and railroad towns.

CONSCIENCE AND CORPORATIONS

Reminiscences of a Railway Attorney

By MASON B. STARRING
Counsel Chicago City Railway Company

THE UNWEARIED INGENUITY OF THE DISHONEST CLAIMANT. SOME OF THE AMAZING THINGS HE EXPECTS. THE ILLNESSES HE COUNTERFEITS. HARM DONE THE DESERVING BY THE "AMBULANCE CHASER"

IN THE forum of public opinion the corporation is assailed by a multitude of accusers, the burden of whose denunciations is that this "artificial citizen" is as devoid of conscience as the paper upon which its creative charter is engrossed. Not less interesting or significant is the problem presented by the attitude of the public conscience toward the corporation. Any official charged with the responsibility of adjusting claims for damages made against a large corporation enjoys opportunities for the study of this phase of the problem not possible to others differently situated. It is, therefore, not as an apologist for the corporation, but as a student of the public sentiment in dealing with the corporation on such matters that I present pertinent facts and deductions gained from over twenty years of experience in the supervision of claims against corporations.

Let it be clearly understood, then, that my position is not that of an advocate or a defendant, but of an observer of a peculiar phase of human experience which bears directly upon a question of common conscience in relation to industries organized along corporate lines. I shall endeavor to remain content to place a representative array of facts before the reader and allow him to draw his own conclusions.

Generally speaking, the public maintains a double standard of morals—one for dealings with corporations, another for transactions with individuals. The man who holds himself bound to govern his relations with a corporation by the same rule of morals and ethics which regulates his relations with the natural instead of the artificial citizen is a rare person. The almost universal feeling is that a corporation is not entitled to the strict application of the law of good morals and common honesty that is given to individuals acting in a private capacity. The public code in dealing with the corporation is that "a man is entitled to all he can get out of a corporation."

The Story of the Honest Shopman

In handling thousands of cases which substantiate the prevalence of this attitude, due prominence should be given to the nature and extent of the exceptions to the rule. I do not recall a single one of these gratifying exceptions in which the claimant was not a person in humble circumstances. Examples of this high order of integrity are not so numerous that I cannot readily recall almost every one in the whole of my experience. One of the most startling is of a kind to revive a waning faith in the rectitude of human character.

Shortly after six o'clock one evening I was a passenger in a street car; a sudden stoppage of the car between street intersections and a slight flurry of excitement among the passengers warned me that an accident had happened. Alighting, I found a man stretched on the ground close to the track at a point where the paving of the street between the tracks and sidewalk was more or less out of repair. Telling the conductor not to delay traffic and that I would take personal charge of the case, I learned that the man's home was immediately opposite.

I assisted the man into a living-room behind the little shop of which he was the proprietor; and as the physician who had been sent for did not arrive promptly I cut away the man's shoe and stocking, prepared hot applications and did my best to relieve his pain. After the pain had been partially relieved I drew from my pocket a memorandum book and asked the sufferer for his name.

"None of your business!" he snapped in a manner that confused me for the moment. Recovering from my astonishment and thinking that he did not understand the official nature of my question, I said:

"Isn't that rather a short answer to give a man who has picked you up in the street in a disabled condition, carried you into your home and dressed your wounds? Perhaps you don't understand that I represent the——"

"Yes, I do," he interrupted; "you are one of the street railway men. If I was snappish you'll have to excuse me on account of the pain. But really it isn't any of the street-car company's business, for I stepped off the car when it was in motion between crossings; my foot struck a loose paving-block which threw me and gave my ankle a savage twist. It was all my own fault—no fault of the company. I'm much obliged for what you've done, but all I want now is to be let alone. And you needn't be afraid I'll bother you for any damage money either!"

That settled the case, for he never preferred a claim and was loath to accept the attentions of the company's surgeon. The comforts of that man's home were meagre and the sum of money I would willingly have paid him on the spot, to forestall the possibility of his mind being poisoned by suggestions of gain, would have been a decided windfall to the poor fellow. His case was a rare one and deserves a bright page in the history of the railroad's troubles.

Occasionally the moral nature of "personal injury" claimants asserts itself after an adjustment has been made and results in the keeping of a "conscience fund" account on the books of the company. This asset, however, is decidedly a small one. The largest contribution ever made to that fund, so far as my personal observation goes, was twenty dollars. Invariably the anonymous letters from the conscience-stricken contributors gave evidence that the penitents were poor people. Generally they contented themselves with the statement that they had secured the damage money through misrepresenting the nature or extent of their injuries or, more commonly, the liability of the company. Sometimes they volunteered the excuse that, at the time of the adjustment, they had been deceived into thinking that they were entitled to all they could get out of a corporation by fair means or foul.

Of all the varied classes of claimants the most dreaded and difficult to handle are those who bring to bear the subtle influence of what is technically termed "social pull." Not infrequently a conscientious claim agent finds that this influence has reached "above his head" and that the discharge of his duty brings him into opposition with others more easily influenced. Quite generally claims pressed with this kind of backing are either fraudulent or extortionate. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule; but the very fact that the claimant feels called upon to exert a personal and social pressure is a strong presumption that his contention is not strong enough to stand upon its own merits. And in this connection it should be stated that corporation officers, and particularly those engaged in passenger transportation, are not unmindful of the public attitude of sensitiveness and quasi-hostility, and are therefore willing to make a just and liberal settlement rather than take a personal injury case into the courts. This is simply a plain business proposition and for this attitude the corporation need not lay claim to any credit. Litigation is expensive, and as a rule it is cheaper to settle a claim on a liberal basis than to fight it in law even with a reasonable certainty of success. Following this policy every effort is made to keep cases out of court. The person with large social influence at his command never fails to make the most of this rule of claim adjustment. One of the most important cases which ever came under my observation illustrates this phase of warfare upon the corporation.

The Case of the Social Strategist

A perfunctory report of the collision of a street railway car with a private carriage came to a company's office. Apparently the incident was of minor importance, as the vehicle was not overturned. The handle of the carriage door—the only portion of the conveyance struck by the car—was not broken and the glass in the door was not even cracked.

Although a claim for a large sum was filed, this was regarded as merely a routine matter. Some fourteen months elapsed before active pressure of the demand was made. Meantime the claimant had been busy putting the social machinery at command in operation. Fortune favored the claimant in the acquaintance of several officers of the defendant company and these ties were insidiously fostered and strengthened. But the social campaign of the claimant did not stop here. Skillfully the warfare was carried into the very household of the particular man having charge of this particular case. A member of the latter's family was repeatedly invited into the home of the injured person, who had at once taken to bed. Pitiful reports of a hopeless condition were retailed to the ears of the relatives of the company's officers with a view of their repetition to those officers.

"A MAN IS ENTITLED TO ALL HE CAN GET OUT OF A CORPORATION"

Through every possible avenue and by the most delicate and convincing agencies the impression was sent home to official minds that the poor unfortunate was a hopeless wreck, doomed to a life of painful and helpless invalidism.

Later the claimant was removed to a celebrated Eastern hospital, where months of treatment were received at the hands of famous specialists. All the energies and the resources of a well-equipped department for the investigation of such matters were devoted to sifting the case to the bottom, with the result that the department, at least, became convinced the claimant was absolutely uninjured and was not entitled to a penny of damages. But the greater the proof collected to enforce this conclusion, the greater the opposition encountered among certain officers of the company.

Eventually the day for the trial of the case arrived without a settlement and the company's attorneys were confident that the course of the law would bring triumph and vindication. Pale, emaciated and distrait, the claimant was brought into court on a stretcher. Instantly the stretcher became the centre of attention and scores of eyes softened with sympathy as they looked upon the sad eyes and long-drawn countenance of the plaintiff. Among the pitying spectators were some of the officers and shareholders of the company who had opposed the policy of the claim department. Under the spell of this touching spectacle they found the reports which had been poured in upon them through social acquaintances, stock and bond holders and men of financial influence to be amply confirmed. In consequence of this affecting court scene the company, despite the plea and proofs of the company's counsel in charge of the case, paid in settlement of the case a large sum; in fact, many thousands of dollars. This was accepted by the litigant and the case was taken out of court.

A most novel, dashing and picturesque testimonial to the sympathy and discernment of those whose influence brought about this settlement was soon given in the form of an elaborate social function at the home of the recent claimant. In the presence of many of the very persons who had used their influence so lavishly to obtain a settlement for this claimant, and who had voted such generous aid, the "lifelong invalid," the "hopeless wreck," stood from eight o'clock in the evening until midnight receiving with delightful gayety the guests who had been assembled, apparently in celebration of the miraculous recovery from a bedridden state, but really to make merry over a snug competency filched from a corporation by the skillful mechanism of "the social pull." For sheer effrontery and picturesque impudence I am convinced that this case is not eclipsed in all the annals of personal injury contentions.

The Enterprising "Ambulance Chaser"

There is another and a darker side to personal injury litigation worthy the pen of a Hugo, so compelling is its simple pathos. Nor is this side of the traffic in human misfortune lacking in lessons on the score of public conscience. I refer to the business of the law firms which devote themselves mainly or exclusively to personal injury litigation, either by personal solicitation, or masquerading as companies organized to foster and maintain that class of litigation. Such as follow these practices should not be recognized as members of the legal profession, for their methods are in violation of all the canons of professional ethics and are held in abhorrence by every self-respecting member of the bar. One firm in this nefarious practice maintained a large corps of solicitors, perhaps fifty men and women, who are technically known as "ambulance chasers." These vultures watch the daily newspapers, the reports from police stations, and spy upon the ambulances of the public and private hospitals. No means which promises to afford them instant knowledge of every casualty within the radius of their operations is neglected, and they are frequently at the ear of the victim of an accident before the physician. The bedside of suffering or death has no sanctity which they hesitate to violate.

How these members of the legal fraternity prey upon their victims is shown by an incident which came directly under my attention. The husband of a poor woman who was partially paralyzed was killed by a locomotive. She was at once visited by the "ambulance chasers" and by the avowed representatives of two "personal injury" firms. Ignorant of business methods she "assigned" her case to both firms, contracting to pay one sixty per cent. and the other fifty per cent. of the sum recovered as damages for the loss of her husband. In order to support herself and her crippled and mentally afflicted child she was compelled to go out scrubbing, leaving the helpless and irresponsible child locked in the wretched room in which they lived.

During the vacation time of the courts, feeling a desire for additional payments from the woman, one of the solicitors who had secured from her a contract threatened that her suit would be thrown out of court unless she at once raised some money for additional court costs, which costs, of course, did not accrue and were not demanded by any court. To do this she was compelled to mortgage the last chattels of any value which she had in her possession. Meantime these "legal representatives" had persistently blocked the attempts of the railroad company to effect a reasonable and just settlement.

According to my observations an enormous proportion of the cases entered for litigation in the courts of Cook County, the field of my own experience, are personal injury suits, and of these fully ninety per cent. involve a clear element of fraud, most of them being supported in whole or in part by fraudulent and perjured testimony.

Frauds Exposed by the X-Ray

Science has come mightily to the aid of the claim agent in throwing the telltale search-light of the X-ray machine upon the human anatomy. This marvelous invention is effecting the saving of thousands of dollars every year to the big transportation corporations and the detection of hundreds of cases of fraud and imposition. Speaking from personal observation only, I am convinced that not less than twenty-five per cent. of the claims that bones have been broken or fractured in street and steam railway accidents are sheer frauds and no fractures exist. Previous to the invention of the X-ray instrument it was much more difficult for the defendant company to arrive at the truth in regard to this point. A limb placed in a plaster cast is thereby put beyond the close inspection of a physician, and it is manifestly impossible for the defendant company to compel the removal of the cast for the direct inspection of the wound; this affords an easy and successful mask for fraud. Now, however, the X-ray reveals, almost at a glance, the real condition of the hidden bone. Could an instrument be invented which would as indisputably and as accurately determine the extent of injuries to nerves and muscles as the X-ray machine reveals the fractures of bones, the task of adjusting personal injuries would be greatly lightened and the vocation of the "ambulance chasers" and their law partners would be largely gone.

Claimants who prey upon the transportation corporation may be broadly divided into two classes: the incidental and the professional. The opportunity of the one is incidental, while that of the latter is a matter of deliberate selection having a basis of fiction only. Often, however, the incidental claimant is graduated into the ranks of the professional. Having once "tasted blood" in the form of damage money, the thirst for a claimant's rewards becomes chronic and is gratified by a career of professional fraud. Immediately following a serious accident on the line of a Western transportation company a demand for heavy damages was filed by a man who claimed to have lost the use of his limbs and to have sustained other injuries as the result of a smash-up. He represented himself to be a merchant and his bearing was that of a substantial business man. Some minor features of the case aroused suspicion on the part of the claim adjuster and he determined to throw all the light possible on the antecedent career of the claimant. The results of the research were satisfactory if not surprising. He learned that the man had been a merchant and had claimed almost identical injuries as the result of another accident which had occurred several years before and from which, upon settlement, he had a miraculous recovery. For the injuries first claimed he had been paid $8500 by the defendant company. Coming to Chicago he kept close watch of the accidents on the lines of a certain street railway, and when one of the most serviceable character took place he elaborated a plausible scheme of evidence which was artfully constructed of straws of circumstance. The case was well calculated to deceive any persons save the suspicious and exacting. The case was pressed to trial, the fraud exposed and the suit thrown out of court. It is needless to say that the impostor pressed the proceedings no further.

A Case of Artificial Paralysis

Probably the most notorious case of professionalism in this peculiar field was that in which an entire family participated. The household consisted of a mother, two daughters who were on the threshold of womanhood, and two young children. Sometimes those who take up this career of fraud are introduced to its possibilities by means of a bona-fide experience in the collection of personal injury damages, but more often by suggestion.

Shortly following a somewhat serious, but not too conspicuous, accident on a Chicago surface line, this widow, as next friend, filed a claim for heavy damages on the ground that the eldest of her daughters had sustained injuries resulting in progressive paralysis.

Medical representatives of the defendant company were admitted to the home, examined and conversed with the invalid, and were convinced that the injuries were not only actual, but very serious. All of her symptoms were consistent with the nature of the disease from which she claimed to suffer. Her lower limbs were cold and apparently insensible. The company did not, however, leave so important a case to surface evidence, but applied the most accurate and searching tests known to modern science.

This young woman passed through a searching ordeal under the esthesiometer with results highly favorable to her side of the case. In the course of the examination to determine motor paralysis, her foot was suddenly released when slightly raised from the surface of the bed, and it was noticed that it did not fall with the sudden drop which would have been inevitable had her limb been without voluntary control. This aroused strong suspicion. A secret-service man was located in the room above the one occupied by the claimant and a hole was carefully drilled at dead of night, which made it possible for him to observe the movements of the patient in the hours of daylight.

His report created a sensation in the office of the company. The young woman, when safe from intrusion, arose from her bed, walked about the room and enjoyed herself after the manner of a person in normal health. Just previous to the time for the arrival of the physician, however, a tub of ice water was brought into the room and she immersed her feet and ankles in this freezing bath. It was heroic treatment, but she was cheered and sustained by her mother, who gave glowing pictures of the big stake for which they were playing and the luxuries which would be theirs when the railroad company paid over the several thousand dollars for which they were contending.

From scraps of conversation overheard by the detective the claim department was able to trace the interesting history of this family. This resourceful woman and her charming family had begun their career as professional claimants in the East and had victimized one railway company after another, gradually moving westward. Their cases had been prepared with skill, and she and the children had played the part of victims with a stoic fortitude that would have done credit to a Spartan and a cleverness that a star heroine of the stage might well covet.

How Bad Latin Lost a Suit

Not all the experiences of those in charge of claim matters are of the depressing order; some are relieved with touches of humor which serve to lighten the dreary routine of fighting frauds and impostors.

A woman claiming to be a homœopathic physician enjoying a substantial practice brought suit against a Chicago surface road on the ground that a fall received from one of its cars had caused so severe a nervous shock that it had seriously impaired her ability to discharge her professional duties. Immediately she was asked if she had not fallen headlong down the stairs of a certain department store. Without hesitation she replied:

"I did, sir; but this accident resulted in partially restoring me to health. If you were familiar with the great principle upon which my school of medicine rests you would easily understand why this was a natural result."

Knowing the familiar motto of the homœopathic school, "*Similia similibus curantur*," the company's attorney remarked: "I believe your motto is——"

"*Simile similibus, similiter*," she interrupted. Before the judge and the lawyers had scarcely smothered their merriment she remarked, in reply to a question, that a certain patient had "passed beyond her jurisprudence." The verdict implied that the practice of this physician had not been damaged by the nervous shock she had sustained.

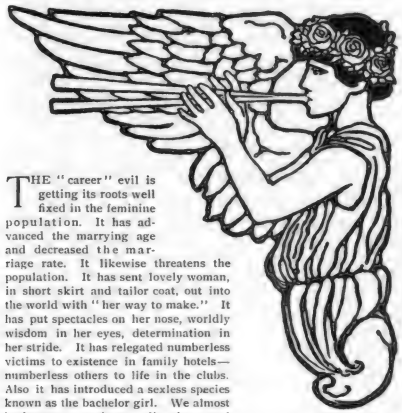
Though the instances I have already given are thoroughly typical of a very large share of the cases which come before the metropolitan law or claim department, the attitude of the public conscience toward the corporation is not fully shown without some reference to the character of claims brought against railroad companies for the killing of live stock. In handling thousands of these claims I have yet to see one which did not represent the creature killed as being of superior pedigree and value. On the other hand, scores of the ropes with which animals of inferior grade or crippled or diseased have been bound to the railroad track to await providential execution by the locomotive have been secured and produced in evidence. It is cheerfully granted that the farmers of this country have a good average of conscience and morality, and it is that fact which gives peculiar significance to the condition which obtains with relation to claims against corporations. There is no escaping from the conclusion enforced by this observation. Men who could not be induced to deal dishonorably with private individuals acting as such do not scruple to make false representations as to the nature and value of cattle or stock injured on the right of way of a railroad. And the men who justify and indulge this kind of "sharp practice" in dealing with a corporation might safely be trusted with a private loan, unsecured.

Previous to a very few years ago the steam and street railroad companies of every kind, and the "common carriers" of various descriptions, have been the main sufferers from this deplorable attitude of the public conscience which decrees one moral standard for dealings with the private individual and another and a much lower one for transactions with a corporation. Now the application of this double standard is being made to many other kinds of corporations. The municipality is the worst sufferer of all; but the manufacturer, even the smaller and the private industrial concern, is being brought under the application of this sentiment and practice. Personal injury suits are on the increase at a sensational ratio, and the calendars of the courts are so overcrowded, despite the admitted decrease of general litigation, that the cry is constantly heard in every large municipality for an increase of the judiciary. In most localities the personal injury claim "industry" is directly behind this demand—a fact which should be carefully scrutinized by the people. When the enormity of this unsavory phase of litigation is understood, its growth will be curtailed and suits of genuine importance will not be continued from term to term because the court is overburdened with the cases of the "hospital chasers."

Matrimony Versus A Career

By Lavinia Hart

DOES THE BACHELOR GIRL GET HER EQUIVALENT FOR HER RENUNCIATION? THE QUESTION AND THE ANSWER



THE "career" evil is getting its roots well fixed in the feminine population. It has advanced the marrying age and decreased the marriage rate. It likewise threatens the population. It has sent lovely woman, in short skirt and tailor coat, out into the world with "her way to make." It has put spectacles on her nose, worldly wisdom in her eyes, determination in her stride. It has relegated numberless victims to existence in family hotels—numberless others to life in the clubs. Also it has introduced a sexless species known as the bachelor girl. We almost hesitate to say that we live in a real home, the kind that mother used to make, and that our women folk are not struggling for night keys and everlasting fame.

Whence comes this new condition? We remember days when women's nerves, and husbands, and homes, and natural tendencies were not sacrificed for ambition and big headlines. But those were days before the "higher education." The "co-ed" was yet unborn.

It is not the present intention to depreciate the value of the college education for woman. Indeed it is to be deplored that the institutions of higher learning were not opened to them centuries ago; for this country would then have been spared the hysteria attendant upon adjustment to the new conditions. Women should have all the learning they can digest. But when the higher education tends to unfit rather than to fit them for their work in life, it savors strongly of mental and moral indigestion.

The highest purpose of the college is culture. The quickest means to culture is education. But education is not culture. Culture is the moral and ethical application of education. It does not consist in the memorizing of facts and figures, but somewhat in how much of them we forget. It is not the text of the fable but its moral that avails.

The Real Aim of Education

The Greek and Latin and mathematics of the college curriculum are not inflicted for the sake of conversational gymnastics, nor yet as a guarantee for counting-house employment. The study of these subjects does not aim toward a greater or less familiarity with Greek and Latin and mathematics, but toward the foundation and formation of character. This is the aim of the university and of all higher education. When women have come fully to realize this; when they can view education as a means rather than an end; when they can appropriate its forces to their own use, rather than be appropriated by them; when they can view the college course as a whole and dedicate it to its proper place as a good and wholesome influence upon character, then they will know just what to do with their Greek and Latin and mathematics, and a perplexing crisis in the history of the feminine intellect will have passed.

But that day is distant; and until it dawns women are going to fuss about the uses to which they shall put their newly acquired learning. We know more about women than their male biographers who attribute to them extravagance. Their trend is toward economy, and they have a natural horror of waste. The four years of college life must therefore be properly invested and the acquisitions thereof capitalized and made to bear fruit. There are the arts, professions, sciences. Man, in either the mood generous or the mood compulsory, has opened wide to his sisters the door to the enchanted grounds. If he has not yet extended the full privileges, at least there are "Ladies' Days." There is also matrimony; and all days are "Ladies' Days." But gracious! One's great-great-grandmothers went in for that in Puritan times, before there were any female colleges, or co-eds, or even public schools; and "higher education" and "culture" and "ethics" and all those desirable-sounding things were yet unheard of. If woman isn't to make a name for herself and have a career and do things, what is the use of all this educational advancement? Of course there are women who will take to matrimony. They are gifted for that sort of thing—keeping house and rearing children and puttering over pie recipes—the clinging-vine type of the old school. But it is different with the co-ed. The light of the higher education has fallen upon her and disclosed the path that leads to fame. She hears a voice calling from the heights and she must go. Whatever the sacrifice, Fate has beckoned, and it is her life.

Besides, *sotto voce*, it is easy, and the gains are great. The secret of fame is to tickle the public—not at the moment when it would weep. She is not unfamiliar with the ways and means of genius. In her college course she has hobnobbed with great minds. She has a generous smattering of the things they did and knows a thing or two about the elements of luck and public caprice. A painting, a poem, a statue, a brief, a delicate operation or a scientific discovery, and, presto! the fortunate favorite of Fate rubs the sleep from his eyes one fine morning to discover the world at his feet and laurels on his lucky brow! That this fortunate of Fate is usually old when the laurels arrive is a detail; that the loved ones to whom they would have mattered have deserted or starved is another; that worry and work and unsatisfied longing have wrecked his nervous system, and failure and humiliation and deprivation have whitened his blood and laid a withering finger on his spiritual nature—details all. Fame came as the result of his labor, and that lives. There is no record of his toil, his failures, his hopes, his despairs, his curses, his prayers. He just "wakes one fine morning" to find that the world has understood. "Lucky dog," says the public verdict. "And such is fame," says the co-ed.

But fame is not public caprice, nor is it a popular hit. The shout of the multitude dies on its lips if the popular hit be not based on something solid and worthy. No man or woman ever gained lasting fame by chance. The success that flashes suddenly upon the world is no mushroom growth. It is the result of courage and patience and unceasing toil. Fame does not come by wishing for it; it comes by the sweat of one's brow. We attain its heights more often by scaling the solid piles of successive failures than by floating upward on the tidal wave of a success. All result is the effect of effort; all happiness is the effect of content with what we have; all character is the effect of successful struggle with untoward conditions. No life can be worth while if it have not its shadows as well as its high lights; no character can be worth while if it have not the enduring power born of suffering; no virtue can be worth while if it have not proved its power of resistance; no goal can be worth while that does not demand, by test, proof of the aspirant's character and enduring power and good intent.

The aspirant for fame has no rosy road to follow. The roses are all at the top and the path is briar-strewn. The woman who chooses a career to escape the drudgery of married life will learn that the duties of home are but playthings compared with the toil and strife that are her portion. She will glance back at the "humdrum" life which she has scorned, as cattle look back toward the brook or a field of clover. She will think of the great-great-grandmother, who hadn't any ambition nor any "career," who loved her husband and kept his house, and reared his children and got their blessing, and she will wonder where, in the name of the higher education, she got her wisdom from.

The Shipwreck at the Isle of Content

All the women who yearn for a "career," however, are not impelled by motives of greed or vanity. Some really are searching for the best; they are aiming to realize the highest life of which their capabilities give promise. Can such a realization be found in marriage? They put away their caps and gowns and go out into society. They look around—and shudder. Can this be the best of which women are capable? Competition, rivalry, envy, unrest, a life of sham and glitter and weak pretension, a struggle for prestige that has no power, a striving for place that has no security—a price unheard of for Dead Sea fruit. And out of this turmoil of unreal living, homes called such by courtesy only, friction, emptiness, discontent. Certainly not an inspiring outlook for a girl with high ideals, and earnest endeavor, and fresh, young hope. No wonder the thought of celibacy and a career and honest attainment is garbled into a high ideal and lofty purpose, compared with this empty estate of the modern marriage. But the girl who judges does not go deep enough. Not the effect but the cause solves the problem. She sees women bought and sold in the matrimonial market for gold, for title, for position, and in humbler circles for the mere comfort of "a living"; and for these they give up their lives, their liberty, their selves; for these they stunt the growth of their immortal souls and sacrifice their certain chance of knowing happiness. And she sees men and women marry for love and start with all sails set for the Isle of Content; and presently they have run aground or sprung a leak or foundered on a rock, and folks look on and shake their heads and declare the marital bark is unseaworthy. But it isn't the marital bark that's ailing; it's the men and women who sail her. Marriage is not a success or a failure as a national but as an individual institution. Its fulfillment must depend upon the character and intention of every man and woman who enter into it. The happiness it yields will depend upon the direction of their efforts; whether they seek it from without or whether it comes from within. The measure of their content will depend upon their capacity for envy. The strength and quality and continuity of their love will depend upon their discernment in sifting the things that are real from the things that are not; in grasping the distinction between pleasure and happiness, and in living in those good and wholesome conditions that leave no bitter after-taste, no withering reaction.

The Kite Without a String

There is an ideal state in marriage, and, in spite of appearances that belie, it is often found. But these realized ideals have little in common with the ideals of the girl wavering between matrimony and a career. To her the ideal has to do with things lofty, and perfect, and unattainable. It is a matter of heroics. She has reached an age and a crisis where she must go out into a practical world, with a knowledge that is not at all practical; and with a judgment born of book-learning deal with the vital, palpitating problems of life. She has ideals, but they are like a kite flying high in air with no string attaching it to earth. Such ideals are useless. They are empty, unadaptable day-dreams. The ideals that count rise out of practical knowledge and every-day conditions. They are not things we vaguely long for, but things we intend to get. They are not standards made of clouds and floating comfortably out of reach. They are made of honest intention, and purpose, and grit; and they rise out of healthy consideration of conditions as they exist. Sound, healthy ideals result from a normal, healthy viewpoint; and the woman with such a viewpoint knows that whatever talent she may have, whatever qualification for a successful career, her greatest achievement and most magnificent fulfillment must be found in marriage and the home. For this Nature has endowed her. Not only are these her gifts, her talents, her privileges, but her responsibilities also. All other talents are inferior and secondary; all other careers are makeshifts and substitutes. It is a splendid achievement for a woman to be a successful lawyer, or doctor, or minister, or scientist, or artist, if she be qualified and if she have the time. But men can do these things, and they do them more or less well. What man cannot do, however, is to be the mother of a family and the inspiration of a home. If the woman who might have been a successful artist or doctor or lawyer turns to the duties of wife and mother instead, there will be numerous others to take her place and collect the fee. But no one else in the world can bear her children, or make the home she might have builded, or instil her character and purpose into the minds of a new generation of little men and women.

(Continued on Page 16)

XUM

THE PIT

By FRANK NORRIS

Author of The Octopus

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LISTENING, ONE FIST PRESSED AGAINST HER LIPS

CHAPTER XIV

SHE went directly to the table, and then, catching her breath with a quick, apprehensive sinking of the heart, stopped short. The little heart-shaped matchbox was gone. On the couch in the corner of the room Page, her book fallen to the floor beside her, lay curled up and asleep.

Laura, a loop of her riding-habit over her arm, the toe of her boot tapping the floor nervously, stood motionless in the centre of the room, her lips tight pressed, the fingers of one gloved hand drumming rapidly upon her riding-crop. She was bewildered, and an anxiety cruelly poignant, a dread of something she could not name, gripped suddenly at her throat.

Could she have been mistaken? Was it upon the table that she had seen the matchbox, after all? If it lay elsewhere about the room she must find it at once. Never had she felt so degraded as now, when, moving with such softness and swiftness as she could in her agitation command, she went here and there about the room, peering into the corners of her desk, searching upon the floor, upon the chairs, everywhere, anywhere; her face crimson, her breath failing her, her hands opening and shutting.

But the silver heart with its crown of worn gold was not to be found.

Laura, at the end of half an hour, was obliged to give over searching. She was certain the matchbox lay upon the mahogany table when last she left the room. It had not been mislaid; of that she was now persuaded.

But while she sat at the desk, still in habit and hat, rummaging for the fourth time among the drawers and shelves, she was all at once aware, even without turning around, that Page was awake and watching her. Laura cleared her throat.

"Have you seen my blue notepaper, Page?" she asked. "I want to drop a note to Mrs. Cressler right away."

"No," said Page as she rose from the couch. "No, I haven't seen it." She came toward her sister across the room. "I thought, maybe," she added gravely, as she drew the heart-shaped matchbox from her pocket, "that you might be looking for this. I took it. I knew you wouldn't care to have Mr. Jadwin find it here."

Laura struck the little silver heart from Page's hand with a violence that sent it spinning across the room and sprang to her feet.

"You took it!" she cried. "You took it! How dare you! What do you mean? What do I care if Curtis should find it here? What's it to me that he should know that Mr. Corthell came up here? Of course he was here."

But Page, though very pale, was perfectly calm under her sister's outburst.

"If you didn't care whether any one knew that Mr. Corthell came up here," she said quietly, "why did you tell us this morning at breakfast that you and he were in the art gallery the whole evening? I thought," she added with elaborate blandness—"I thought I would be doing you a service in hiding the matchbox."

"A service! You! What have I to hide?" cried Laura, almost inarticulate. "Of course I said we were in the art gallery the whole evening. So we were. We did—I do remember now—we did come up here for an instant, to see how my picture hung. We went downstairs again at once. We did not so much as sit down. He was not in the room two minutes."

"He was here," returned Page, "long enough to smoke half a dozen times." She pointed to a silver pen-tray on the mahogany table, hidden behind a bookrack and littered with the ashes and charred stumps of some five or six cigarettes.

"Really, Laura," Page remarked—"Really, you manage very awkwardly, it seems to me."

Laura caught her riding-crop in her right hand.

"Don't you—don't you make me forget myself," she cried breathlessly.

"It seems to me," observed Page quietly, "that you've done that long since, yourself."

Laura flung the crop down and folded her arms.

"Now," she cried, her eyes blazing and riveted upon Page's—"Now, just what do you mean? Sit down," she commanded, flinging a hand toward a chair; "sit down and tell me just what you mean by all this."

But Page remained standing. She met her sister's gaze without wavering.

"Do you want me to believe," she answered, "that it made no difference to you that Mr. Corthell's matchsafe was here?"

"Not the least," exclaimed Laura. "Not the least."

"Then why did you search for it so when you came in? I was not asleep all of the time. I saw you."

"Because," answered Laura, "because—I—because——" Then all at once she burst out afresh: "Have I got to answer to you for what I do? Have I got to explain? All your life long you've pretended to judge your sister. Now you've gone too far. Now I forbid it—from this day on. What I do is my affair; I'll ask nobody's advice. I'll do as I please! Do you understand?" The tears sprang to her eyes, the sobs strangled in her throat. "I'll do as I please, as I please," and with the words she sank down in the chair by her desk and struck her bare knuckles again and again upon the open lid, crying out through her tears and her sobs, and from between her tight-shut teeth: "I'll do as I please! Do you understand? As I please, as I please! I will be happy. I will, I will, I will!"

"Oh, darling, dearest——" cried Page, running forward. But Laura, on her feet once more, thrust her back.

"Don't touch me," she cried. "I hate you!" She put her fists to her temples, and, her eyes closed, rocked herself to and fro. "Don't you touch me. Go away from me; go away from me. I hate you; I hate you all. I hate this house, I hate this life! You are all killing me! Oh, if I could only die!"

She flung herself full length upon the couch, face downward. Her sobs shook her from head to foot.

Page knelt at her side, an arm about her shoulder, but to all her sister's consolations Laura, her voice muffled in her folded arms, only cried:

"Let me alone, let me alone. Don't touch me."

For a time Page tried to make herself heard; then, after a moment's reflection, she got up and drew out the pin in Laura's hat. She took off the hat, loosened the scarf around Laura's neck, and then deftly, silently, while her sister lay inert and sobbing beneath her hands, removed the stiff, straight riding-habit. She brought a towel dipped in cold water from the adjoining room and bathed Laura's face and hands.

But her sister would not be comforted, would not respond to her entreaties or caresses. The better part of an hour went by; Page, knowing her sister's nature, in the end held her peace, waiting for the paroxysm to wear itself out.

After a while Laura's weeping resolved itself into long, shuddering breaths, and at length she managed to say in a faint, choked voice:

"Will you bring me the cologne from my dressing-table, honey? My head aches so."

And, as Page ran toward the door, she added: "And my hand-mirror, too. Are my eyes all swollen?"

And that was the last word upon the subject between the two sisters.

But the evening of the same day, between eight and nine o'clock, while Laura was searching the shelves of the library for a book with which to while away the long evening that she knew impended, Corthell's card was brought to her.

"I am not at home," she told the servant. "Or—wait," she added. Then, after a moment's thought, she said: "Very well. Show him in here."

Laura received the artist, standing very erect and pale upon the great white rug before the empty fireplace. Her hands were behind her back when he came in, and as he crossed the room she did not move.

"I was not going to see you at first," she said. "I told the servant I was not at home. But I changed my mind—I wanted to say something to you."

He stood at the other end of the fireplace, an elbow upon an angle of the massive mantel, and as she spoke the last words he looked at her quickly. As usual, they were quite alone. The heavy, muffling curtain of the doorway shut them in effectually.

"I have something to say to you," continued Laura. Then, quietly enough, she said:

"You must not come to see me any more."

He turned abruptly away from her, and for a moment did not speak. Then at last, his voice low, he faced her again and asked: "Have I offended?"

She shook her head.

"No," he said quietly. "No, I knew it was not that."

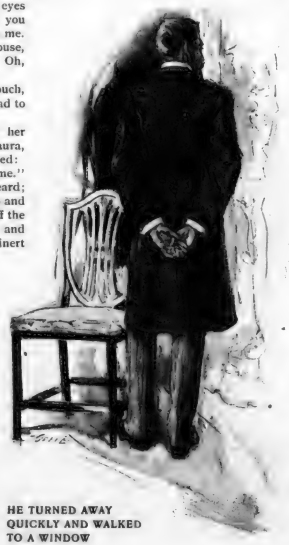
There was a long silence. The artist looked at the floor, his hand slowly stroking the back of one of the big leather chairs.

"I knew it must come," he answered at length, "sooner or later. You are right—of course. I should not have come back to America. I should not have believed that I was strong enough to trust myself. Then"—he looked at her steadily. His words came from his lips one by one, very slowly. His voice was hardly more than a whisper—"Then, I am—never to see you—again. . . . Is that it?"

"Yes."

"Do you know what that means for me?" he cried. "Do you realize——" He drew in his breath sharply. "Never to see you again! To lose even the little that is left to me now. I—I——" He turned away quickly and walked to a window and stood a moment, his back turned, looking out, his hands clasped behind him. Then, after a long moment, he faced about. His manner was quiet again, his voice very low.

"But before I go," he said, "will you answer me at least this—it can do no harm now that I am to leave you—answer me, and I know you will speak the truth: Are you happy, Laura?"



HE TURNED AWAY QUICKLY AND WALKED TO A WINDOW

She closed her eyes.

"You have not the right to know."

"You are not happy," he declared. "I can see it; I know it. If you were you would have told me so. . . . If I promise you," he went on, "if I promise you to go away now, and never to try to see you again, may I come once more—to say good-by?"

She shook her head.

"It is so little for you to grant," he pleaded, "and it is so incalculably much for me to look forward to in the little time that yet remains. I do not even ask to see you alone. I will not harass you with any heroics."

"Oh, what good will it do," she cried wearily, "for you to see me again? Why will you make me more unhappy than I am? Why did you come back?"

"Because," he answered steadily, "because I love you more than"—he partly

raised a clenched fist and let it fall slowly upon the back of the chair—"more than any other consideration in the world."

"Don't!" she cried. "You must not. Never, never say that to me again. Will you go—please?"

"Oh, if I had not gone from you four years ago!" he cried. "If I had only stayed then! Not a day of my life since that I have not regretted it. You could have loved me then. I know it, I know it, and, God forgive me, but I know you could love me now——"

"Will you go?" she cried.

"I dare you to say you could not!" he flashed out.

Laura shut her eyes and put her hands over her ears. "I could not, I could not," she murmured monotonously, over and over again. "I could not, I could not."

She heard him start suddenly, and opened her eyes in time to see him come quickly toward her. She threw out a defensive hand.

"Go, go," was all she had voice to utter.

"And may I see you once more—only once?"

"Yes, yes, anything; only go, go!"

He left the room. In another moment she heard the front door close.

"Curtis," said Laura when next she saw her husband—"Curtis, you could not—stay with me, that last time. Remember? When we were to go for a drive. Can you spend the evening with me? Just us two, here at home—or I'll go out with you. I'll do anything you say." She looked at him steadily an instant. "It is not—not easy for a woman to ask—for me to ask favors like this. Each time I tell myself it will be the last. I am—you must remember this, Curtis—I am—perhaps I am a little proud. Don't you see?"

They were at the breakfast-table again. It was the morning after Laura had given Corthell his dismissal. As she spoke Jadwin brought his hand down upon the table with a bang.

"You bet I will," he exclaimed—"you bet I'll stay with you to-night. Business can go to the devil! And we won't go out, either; we'll stay right here. You get something to read to me, and we'll have one of our old evenings again. We——"

All at once Jadwin paused, laid down his knife and fork, and looked strangely to and fro about the room.

"We'll have one of our old evenings again," he repeated slowly.

"What is it, Curtis?" demanded his wife. "What is the matter?"

"Oh—nothing," he answered.

"Why, yes, there was. Tell me."

"No, no. I'm all right now," he returned briskly enough.

"No," she insisted. "You must tell me. Are you sick?"

He hesitated a moment. Then:

"Sick?" he queried. "No, indeed. But—I'll tell you. Since a few days I've had"—he put his fingers to his forehead between his eyes—"I've had a queer sensation right there. It comes and goes."

"A headache?"

"N-no. It's hard to describe. A sort of numbness. Sometimes it's as though there was a heavy iron cap—a helmet on my head. And sometimes it—I don't know, it seems as if there were fog, or something or other, inside. I'll take a good long rest this summer, as soon as we can get away. Another month or six weeks and I'll have things shipshape and so as I can leave them. Then we'll go up to Geneva, and, by Jingo, I'll loaf." He was silent for a moment, frowning, passing his hand across his forehead and winking his eyes. Then, with a return of his usual alertness, he looked at his watch.

"Hi!" he exclaimed. "I must be off. I won't be home to dinner to-night. But you can expect me by eight o'clock sure. I promise I'll be here on the minute."

But, as he kissed his wife good-by, Laura put her arms about his neck.

"Oh, I don't want you to leave me at all, ever, ever! Curtis, love me, love me always, dear. And be thoughtful of me and kind to me. And remember that you are all I have in the world; you are father and mother to me, and my dear husband as well. I know you do love me; but there are times—oh," she cried suddenly, "if I thought you did not love me—love me better than anything, anything—I could not love you; Curtis, I could not, I could not. No, no," she cried, "don't interrupt. Hear me out. Maybe it is wrong of me to feel that way, but I'm only a woman, dear. I love you, but I love Love, too. Women are like that: right or wrong, weak or strong, they must be—must be loved above everything else in the world. Now go, go to your business; you mustn't be late. Hark, there is Jarvis with the team. Go now. Good-by, good-by, and I'll expect you at eight."

True to his word, Jadwin reached his home that evening promptly at the promised hour. As he came into the house, however, the door-man met him in the hall, and, as he took his master's hat and stick, explained that Mrs. Jadwin was in the art gallery, and she had said he was to come there at once.

Laura had planned a little surprise. The art gallery was darkened. Here and there behind the dull-blue shades a light burned low. But one of the movable reflectors that were used to throw a light upon the pictures in the topmost rows was burning brilliantly. It was turned from Jadwin as he entered, and its broad cone of intense white light was thrown full upon Laura, who stood over against the organ in the full costume of Théodora.

"NOW," SHE CRIED, HER EYES BLAZING, "JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN?"

For an instant Jadwin was taken all aback.

"What the devil!" he ejaculated, stopping short in the doorway.

Laura ran forward to him, the chains, ornaments and swinging pendants chiming furiously as she moved.

"I did surprise you, I did surprise you," she laughed. "Isn't it gorgeous?" She turned about before him, her arms raised. "Isn't it superb? Do you remember Bernhardt—and that scene in the Emperor Justinian's box at the amphitheatre? Say now that your wife isn't beautiful. I am, am I not?" she exclaimed defiantly, her head raised. "Say it."

"Well, what for a girl!" gasped Jadwin, "to get herself up——"

"Say that I am beautiful," commanded Laura.

"Well, I just about guess you are," he cried.

"The most beautiful woman you have ever known?" she insisted. Then on the instant added: "Oh, I may be really as plain as a kitchen-maid, but you must believe that I am not. I would rather be ugly and have you think me beautiful, than to be the most beautiful woman in the world and have you think me plain. Tell me—am I not the most beautiful woman you ever saw?"

"The most beautiful I ever saw," he repeated fervently. "But—Lord, what will you do next? Whatever put it into your head to get into this rig?"

"Oh, I don't know. I just took the notion. You've seen me in every one of my gowns. I sent down for this this morning just after you left. Curtis, if you hadn't made me love you enough to be your wife, Laura Jadwin would have been a great actress. I feel it in my finger-tips."

"You sure would," answered Jadwin as she made a place for him among the cushions. "But at the same time, old girl, I wouldn't—wouldn't——"

"Wouldn't what?"

"Well, do too much of that. It's sort of overwrought—a little, and unnatural. I like you best when you are your old self, quiet, and calm, and dignified. It's when you are quiet that you are at your best, dear. I didn't know you had this streak in you. You are that excitable to-night!"

"Let me be so, then. It's myself, for the moment, whatever it is. But now I'll be quiet. Now we'll talk. Have you had a hard day? Oh, and did your head bother you again?"

"No, things were a little easier downtown to-day. But that queer feeling in my head did come back as I was coming home—and my head aches a little now, besides."

"Your head aches!" she exclaimed. "Let me do something for it. And I've been making it worse with all my foolishness."

"No, no; that's all right," he assured her. "I tell you what we'll do. I'll lie down here a bit, and you play something for me. Something quiet. I get so tired down there in La Salle Street, Laura; you don't know."

And while he stretched out at full length upon the couch his wife, at the organ, played the music she knew he liked best—old songs: Daisy Dean, When Stars are in the Quiet Sky, and Open Thy Lattice to Me.

When at length she paused he nodded his head with pleasure.

"That's pretty," he said. "Ah, that is blamed pretty. Honey, it's just like medicine to me," he continued, "to lie here, quiet like this, with lights low, and have my dear girl play those old, old tunes. My old governor, Laura, used to play that Open the Lattice to Me, that and Father, oh, Father, Come Home with Me Now—used to play 'em on his fiddle." His arm under his head, he went on, looking vaguely at the opposite wall. "Lord love me, I can see that kitchen in the old farmhouse as plain! The walls were just logs and plaster, and there were upright supports in each corner, where we used to measure our heights—we children. And the fireplace was there," he added, gesturing with his arm, "and there was the wood-box, and over here was an old kind of dresser with drawers, and the torty-shell cat always had her kittens under there. Honey, I was happy then. Of course, I've got you now, and that's all the difference in the world. But you're the only thing that does make a difference. We've got a fine place and a mint of money, I suppose—and I'm proud of it. But I don't know. . . . If they'd let me be and put us two—just you and me—back in the old house with the bare floors and rawhide chairs and the shuck beds, I guess we'd manage. If you're happy, you're happy: that's about the size of it. And sometimes I think that if we'd be happier—you and I—chumming along shoulder to shoulder, poor an' working hard, than making big money an' spending big money, why—oh, I don't know; . . . if you're happy, that's the thing that counts, and if all this stuff," he kicked out a careless foot at the pictures, the heavy hangings, the glass cabinets of bibelots—"if all this stuff stood in the way of it—well—it could go to blazes! That's not poetry, maybe, but it's the truth."

Laura came over to where her husband lay and sat by him, and took his head in her lap, smoothing his forehead with her long, white hands.

"Oh, if I could only keep you like this always," she murmured. "Keep you untroubled, and kind, and true. This is my husband again. Oh, you are a man, Curtis; a great, strong, kind-hearted man, with no little graces, nor petty culture, nor trivial fine speeches, nor false sham, imitation polish. I love you. Ah, I love you, love you, dear!"

"Old girl!" said Jadwin, stroking her hand.

"Do you want me to read to you now?" she asked.

"Just this is pretty good, it seems to me."

As he spoke there came a step in the hall and a knock. Laura sat up, frowning.

"I told them I was not to be disturbed," she exclaimed under her breath. Then, "Come in," she called.

"Mr. Gretry, sir," announced the servant. "Said he wished to see you at once, sir."

"Tell him," cried Laura, turning quickly to Jadwin—"Tell him you're not at home—that you can't see him."

"I've got to see him," answered Jadwin, sitting up. "He wouldn't come here himself unless it was for something important."

"Can I come in, J.?" spoke the broker from the hall. And even through the thick curtains they could hear how his voice rang with excitement and anxiety.

(Continued on Page 20)

XUM

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
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GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, Editor

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Poor Richard Junior's Philosophy

¶Success comes—but it has to be invited.

¶Wagons hitched to stars should have good wheels.

¶Some people are so vain that they accept snapshots of themselves.

¶Golf would not be so popular if playing it produced garden truck.

¶It is the man who likes cereals for breakfast who is likely to feel his oats.

¶When the poor pianist has music on the rack the hearers are in the same fix.

¶A lawyer's definition of crime depends very largely upon which side of the case has engaged his services.

¶The man who is a fugitive from injustice must often run faster than would be necessary if mere justice were on his trail.

¶Some people who are confidently expecting to make a "death-bed repentance" forget they may be killed in a railroad accident.

¶Nothing is more remarkable than the increase in the utilization of waste products. Some day it may even reach the waste-basket.

¶An international congress of wireless telegraphy takes place next March, and as usual the speechless speeches will get leave to print.

¶The new White House, with its additions, is pronounced very unsatisfactory. But from last accounts the present tenant will not object to a renewal of his lease if the landlord is willing.

¶Congress is divided into two parts. The House originates all appropriations and the Senate appropriates all originations. Then a joint committee disjoints both and decides what shall be done.

¶That hundred thousand dollars which Mr. Henry Phipps, of Pittsburg, gave to the Boers has a good round, healthy look about it which impresses and imposes. But the world is accustomed to Pittsburg checks. The numeral on the left may not be large, but the string of naughts that follow to the right lift it into the blue empyrean of generosity, as though they were a lot of balloons.

American Hospitality

A WEEK or two ago a royal Prince, visiting the great Republic, grew tired of admiring the wonders urged upon him, and when he was asked in Pittsburg to shoot up twenty stories in an elevator to a magnificent banquet prepared for him, he struck outright and refused to go.

His hosts were obliged to take him into a restaurant on the street and give him such a dinner as it could afford.

No doubt it was a much more American meal than the ornate feast prepared nearer the sky, and gave him a more correct idea of the daily food and habits of his entertainers.

A titled English visitor who a year ago was fêted for a couple of weeks in Philadelphia happened one day to drop in unexpectedly at a friend's house and was asked to stay for luncheon. He ate of the simple dishes with a puzzled face, and presently said:

"I really did not think that anybody in America ever ate mutton chops and baked potatoes. At every house to which I have been asked the same course of dishes has been set before us: terrapin, filet de bœuf, timbales of sweetbread, and ices. Even the little *plats* are always exactly the same. I fancied that there were no individual tastes among Americans: that they were all fed by caterers: that at the sound of a gong the whole nation from California to Maine sat down and ate the same dishes."

Another American habit which startles a foreign visitor is the loud and persistent energy with which we announce our hospitality to the public. In England when the Kaiser visits his uncle the King, and there is a probability that the incident has some bearing on politics or on a royal marriage, there is an excuse for publicity in the matter. But why should Mrs. John Smith, of Fifth Avenue, tell us who dined with her last night? Or when little Mary Potts, of Mervine Street, had a Hallowe'en party, why should all Philadelphia hear of it? Mrs. Smith and her guests, presumably, are gentlefolk; Mary and her girl friends are innocent and modest—why open their homes to the whole staring, gossiping world?

A little story is told of Madame Mohl—most simple and sincere of women—which is of significance in this matter. Queen Sophie, of Holland, her lifelong friend, being in Paris, went to dine with her in her little house in the Rue du Bac. Madame Mohl asked the most brilliant men in France to meet her.

"And what," asked an anxious friend, "can you give a Queen to eat?"

"Oh, I don't know," she said; "my cook is very good in lobster and mayonnaise sauce. I'll give her lobster."

One morning a few days after the dinner the Queen with her suite came to call. Madame Mohl, in an apron, was dusting the drawing-room, and the clean clothes from the laundry were piled on the chairs. Madame Mohl laid down her brush and welcomed her guests. They spent most of the morning with her.

"What did they think of the dust-brush?" asked her mortified friends the next day.

"I suppose her attendants were disgusted, but the Queen did not once think of the dust-brush," she said calmly.

"When I take my friend into my tent," says the Arab proverb, "I give him of my meat and of my home and of my thoughts and of my life."

Beside this old creed is not our American idea of hospitality a little crude and immature?

In the Matter of Losses

A GREAT fire occurs. Millions go up in smoke. "Losses fully covered by insurance," we read, and we are glad. A fine ship goes down. "All lives saved and vessel insured"—and it doesn't seem bad enough for a second thought. Millions go up in smoke every day; every twenty-four hours, on the average, a ship is wrecked—and the world moves on with the pleasant fiction that these stupendous losses are fully covered. It is a universal illusion. The losses are lost irredeemably. They may be taken from the shoulders of the immediate owners and distributed among the crowd, but they are losses all the same. Loss is loss, and insurance or any other ingenuity of human providence cannot make it otherwise.

For illustration, take a scheme now in process of making In spite of earnest precautions there are bank failures with large losses. Now the banks propose a mutual insurance plan, insurance against failure. If one bank fails the other banks pay its losses—they build up a fund for the prospective losses. It is simply a distribution of the burdens. Instead of coming down as thunderbolts on a part of a single community the losses are sprinkled over the entire country. But they are as much losses as though one individual sustained them.

We juggle with the word all through our lives. Men speak of making up lost years, lost sleep, lost opportunities, lost prestige. They don't do it. They can't do it. The moment that has swept by is as much gone as though it were a million years old. The missed chance is as dead as yesterday. An eternity of repentance cannot recover the misspent hour. Fate does not turn back the clock or give rain checks.

We have ideas. We dally and we lose them. We fish for them down in our consciousness—but do we get them again? The poet who has fine lines that never get on the paper, the painter who sees visions and delays mixing his pigments, the writer who blows his best thoughts through rings of laggard smoke, all think they will pull out their losses at other times—but the losses are there and they have not even the consolation of insurance. One of the most heroic things ever done since this world began was when Thomas Carlyle rewrote The French Revolution, after the ignorant servant had burned the first manuscript in the grate. Some may say, here was a case in which the loss was no loss, thanks to a Scot nerve, but who can tell? Isn't it reasonably certain that in that first manuscript Carlyle made things clearer and easier for his readers? Would not the most of us who read the second writing as a matter of duty, like to catch a glimpse of the first? That burning was a loss—a mighty loss, and it illustrates better than anything else could the more complete losses that come when other men procrastinate with ideas and plans, or abandon them altogether.

Regain one's losses? How? Take the greatest optimists—bald people! First and last they have spent more money on hair-restorers than Mr. Morgan or Mr. Rockefeller owns, and never has a lost hair been restored. It may be an humble comparison, but lost years, energies, ambitions and such are as unrecoverable as lost hairs—neither effort nor quackery nor sighing can bring them back.

Again the Victorious Tortoise

IN THE armored cruisers to be built for the Government the Naval Construction Board has decided to make a sacrifice of speed in favor of fighting power. This conclusion has been reached after vigorous and exhaustive discussion, involving the whole range of thought, experience and opinion, and embracing so much writing that it comprises a literature in itself. Stripped of technicality and scientific exposition, the verdict of our highest experts is that the best ship is not the one that can get into a fight most readily or get out of it most quickly, but the one that can stay the longest and do the most while engaged.

In this we have not only a good summing up of ships but of men and things in general. It is a shining illustration of the lesson of modern civilization. We have had in the past plentiful instances of meteoric careers, of rockets that go up in a blaze and come down in darkness, of Napoleons of finance, and of brilliant dashes in politics, business and society. They are all alike. They had the speed and they put it in their initial efforts; so when the time came for the fight their energies were fagged, their resources were limp and their doom was sealed. Staying power is the greatest thing and the only winning force in the practical affairs of modern life. Every career is a battle. It is easy to plunge into it; it is almost as easy to run away from it, but victory waits for the man or the ship that stays in and fights.

The Heroism of To-Day

IN AN age of materialism, when at times it seems as if the world forgot many of the cardinal virtues and was only interested in gaining its own selfish ends, every once in a while some humble person does that which appeals to the emotions and shows that the spirit of knighthood still survives. When a man or a woman risks his or her life, not for any personal advantage or for fame, but because it is a matter of duty, then we know that heroism is not dead and that the great opportunity will always produce the one person required for the emergency.

A few weeks ago General Chaffee sent to the War Department an official report calling attention to the heroic conduct of Alice Kemmer, an army nurse then on duty in the Philippines. Nurse Kemmer had been granted leave of absence and was about to avail herself of a well-earned rest from official duties when two soldiers were taken down with smallpox and removed to the isolation hospital. Alice Kemmer had never had one of the most dreadful diseases with which poor humanity is afflicted, but she did not falter. For two long months she devotedly nursed these men back to health, living all those weary weeks with them as their sole companion, the weather intensely hot, and her sleep so broken that never at any time during that long period was she able to have more than two hours' rest. Probably Alice Kemmer, army nurse, thinks she has merely done her duty and cannot understand why General Chaffee should lavish on her such unstinted praise, but that is the way of heroes. They do what is required of them because it is their duty to do it, and they think neither of themselves nor of any possible reward that may come to them. It is probable that this devoted woman will gain no material recompense for the sublime act of self-renunciation, as the Government of the United States is singularly niggardly in its recognition of heroes in humble places, but she will not be unconscious of the estimation in which she is held by her fellow-countrymen, and the example that she has set may be an inspiration to men and women: to soldiers at the front and to soldiers in the greater army of peace, who sometimes, growing weary under the heat and burden of the day, will find renewed hope and courage when they recall the story of Nurse Alice Kemmer.

CHERRIES IN KENT

By Mary Tracy Earle

"No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season of Christmas."

THE UNEXPECTED CHRISTMAS THAT CAME TO ELEANOR AT PONTOMOC

NIGHT had overtaken the coast train on its way from New Orleans to Pontomoc. The dun-colored marshes lost the gilding of the level sunset light and retreated in dimmer and dimmer stretches on each side of the track. Bays and bayous glimmered still and dark, reflecting the big, soft stars. The marshes fell behind, and pine woods closed around the hurrying train; a sweet smell of pine smoke came in through the open windows. The train shrieked at every wagon track, and stopped wherever a solitary station light and a cluster of carriages waited. At the "Bay" and at the "Pass" little boys with fried chicken and fried oysters to sell invaded the cars, passed through, and cried their wares again on the station platform.

At the larger towns the passengers left the train in talkative groups, and as it sped forward Eleanor Hollingsworth found herself alone in her car. She sat almost breathless, gazing out. The train seemed to have no further object except to carry her, and the panting of its engine showed its zeal on her behalf. She was returning to Pontomoc for the first time since her childhood. Her brother, who had owned their old home, was dead, and in his place were some nieces whom she had never seen, and Mr. Charlie Schuyler, an old playfellow, who was now her nephew by marriage. She was nervously eager to have the journey over, and to find if strangers were waiting for her, or friends.

She had thought that Mr. Charlie would meet her at the train, and as she stepped down from the car she looked about her for a short, slight, sweet-faced man such as she knew Mr. Charlie must be. When some one, tall and broad-shouldered, came hurrying toward her she gave an exclamation of surprise and met him with an expression more startled than glad.

"Well, Howard Beach!" she said with a visible effort to be at ease. "How do you happen to be in Pontomoc? It's about the last place for a casual meeting——"

"But I'm not meeting you casually," Beach answered, with the advantage of not having been taken by surprise. "Mrs. Charlie Schuyler sent me to bring you down from the train. Mr. Charlie was called away for a couple of days, and as none of the family knew you, I offered to come."

"It was very kind of you," Eleanor said, walking at his side in a daze. "But how do you happen to be here? Are you visiting my people?"

"No; but I've been staying in the neighborhood two months, sketching; so I'm well acquainted with them." He helped her into the narrow cart, untied the horse, and got in beside her. "If this equipage hadn't been so diminutive one of the girls would have come up with me," he explained. "They talked of coming, three or four of them, in the double carriage, but I told them it would be pleasanter for you to meet them first at home."

The cart whirled over the hard, glimmering shell road of the village and out into the shadow of the pines. Eleanor said nothing. The scent of pines and myrtle was still fresh in the air after the day of sunshine, and the great bright stars kept abreast of the carriage like friendly convoys in the narrow opening between the pines. She could feel that Beach was handling the reins nervously. If he had had the advantage of preparation, she was making an advantage of her own out of silence.

Beach turned toward her, trying to read her face through the dusk. "To tell the truth," he resumed abruptly, "I wanted a chance to speak to you alone. If it annoys you to find me here, invading your province, I'll go away. I had no idea you were coming down here—you never have before—and I didn't even hear of it until a few days ago. You made up your mind suddenly?"

"Yes," Eleanor said; "there is nothing to hold me in one place more than another. I am free to go and come."

"I know," he assented; "you think that freedom is the whole of life."

She made no answer. Once in a while she leaned forward, as the light in some house gleamed out. "I am trying to remember the road," she told him. "It seems long and unfamiliar, as if I had never been over it before."

"The length is in the time since you were here. They tell me you were only a child."

"And my childhood is terribly remote;" she sighed lightly. "Think of it, all my grown-up nieces have been born since I came away. Tell me about them. I know nothing except from their letters."

"They are pretty," Beach answered, "particularly the youngest, Jessamine. She is posing for a picture I've begun. I think it's going to distance anything I've tried before."

"It will have to be very good, then."

Beach shrugged his shoulders. "I'm pretty well along with it," he said after a moment. "I can finish it somewhere else."

"Why should you? It would never be so good."

"Then you don't mind if I stay?"

"Mr. Beach," her voice trembled a little, "we've been good enough friends to live in the same town and meet in the same circles in the North—why not in the South?"

"Thank you," he said, and there was a different note in his voice, too. "You are always generous. I'll stay—at least, until the picture is finished."

Eleanor leaned back in her place, and the cart sped on. At last Beach turned out of the main road and whistled. Some one came running down a driveway and opened a gate. The cart swung up the drive and stopped before a house with all its doors and windows open wide, and firelight streaming out around a group of people waiting on the gallery.

Almost before Beach could help her down, Eleanor was clasped by eager arms. "I'm Dorothy," a voice said; "oh, it's so good to have you come!"

"I'm Louise," said another voice, "and here's Dabney——"

"And I'm Jessamine. Why, how young you are! You don't look like an aunt at all."

They encircled her and passed her from one to another in a babel of welcome. Besides the immediate family there were relatives of all degrees. She stopped trying to remember or to reason out the relationships, but kissed one after another in bewilderment. A young man was standing in the background. She supposed he was waiting for his turn, but Dorothy, as she brought him forward, said, "You needn't kiss this one, Aunt Eleanor. This is our neighbor, Penn Saunders."

"Now, Dorothy," the young man protested, "that's not loving thy neighbor as thyself." He took Eleanor's hand, and they exchanged a glance of impulsive good-fellowship.

"Penn ought to be counted in—it's only taking time by the forelock," some one declared.

"That's something I've learned never to do," Eleanor said. She glanced across at Jessamine, and saw that the bright rose-color of her cheek had deepened. She was more than pretty; she was picturesque and winsome enough to remember all one's life. For an instant Eleanor's face was wistful, losing its look of youth.

Next morning the unfamiliar country dawn woke the newcomer before any one else in the house was astir. She dressed and stole out-of-doors. Full sunlight was driving the rosy sunrise colors back from the open bay into little sheltered coves alongshore, where they lingered after the rest of the water was rippling blue. She walked down through the garden towards the beach, holding her skirts away from the dew-pearled roses. Every breath of air and every blossom was a welcome home.

At the end of the garden the land broke off into a ragged bluff of sand and clay, down which a rickety board stairway led to the beach, just as it had led years ago. She pushed aside the long banners of gray moss which hung from an oak tree and fluttered across her view. The bay spread unclaimed before her, waiting for her, and its light was reflected from her face.

Penn Saunders came along the beach below. She did not see him until he called out to her, before swinging himself up by the bare roots of an oak tree.

"You had just thought of something before I spoke to you," he said after they had exchanged good-mornings. "I was half inclined to go by without disturbing you."

"I'll tell you what I had thought of," she answered frankly:

> "'Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose
> And Jamshid's Seven-ring'd Cup where no one knows,
> But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
> And many a Garden by the Water blows.'

If you had come back South after being away as long as I have you'd see how that fits everything."

Penn's face lighted up. "I've seen it without ever being away," he said. "I'm glad you care for Omar. I tried to read him once to Dorothy and Jessamine, and they nearly mobbed me. I had to throw the book to Charlie to save it."

"Does he like it?"

"Of course he doesn't—not more than a dozen lines—but he doesn't take it the way the girls do. There's a streak of understanding in him for the things with which he doesn't sympathize. Now the girls are simply shocked. That's the advantage of being a man—oh, I beg your pardon, but you see I can say that to you because you like Omar."

Eleanor smiled. "But I don't like all of Omar all the time," she said. "He's good for certain moods."

"Well, that's a great deal," Penn cried enthusiastically. "I'm sure we're going to be friends."

Eleanor laughed then. "Of course we're going to be," she declared. "I like you, you're so young, and I've been growing so fearfully old up in the North."

"But the life must be great there," Penn said.

"Great! Yes, the life in one of those big cities is a great, terrible machine. You get caught among the wheels and they carry you round and round; there's no stopping them even if they're tearing your heart out. I've seen girls——" She stopped, shaking her head.

"But I've seen you," Penn declared. "You're not the sort of a wreck that makes a good warning."

"You don't know anything about it. I may look all right, but I'm a Dead Sea fruit. Why, I dried up and blew away—that's how I got here. The wind was in the right direction, and I blew right down to see if roses bloomed in the winter still, and if there was such a thing as happiness."

"IF THIS EQUIPAGE HADN'T BEEN SO DIMINUTIVE ONE OF THE GIRLS WOULD HAVE COME UP WITH ME," HE EXPLAINED

Penn looked at her, trying to reconcile the light in her eyes and the glow on her cheeks with her sincerely bitter words. The sunlight showed the fine chiseling with which thought and experience had wrought upon her face, but there was something so intensely alive about her that she seemed more like a very young person, worn with feeling, than like a woman young in spite of years. He knew that she was over thirty, and that had seemed old to him when he had heard the girls talking about her the day before.

"Happiness," he ventured rather shyly, "—there must be for you. I think you are one of the people who make it around them."

"No," Eleanor said. "Dorothy is like that, and Jessamine may be, but I'm too restless. I must find it."

They were silent a moment. Down the garden walk came the sound of light, swift feet. "La-e-hoo!" yodled a girlish voice.

Penn's face quickened and he sent back the call. Jessamine came in sight between the rosebushes, swinging a white sunbonnet by the strings. Another white sunbonnet hung on her shoulders, tied carelessly in front.

"Aunt Eleanor, you don't know how your face is going to burn if you come out bareheaded before you get used to the sunshine," she cried. She settled her extra sunbonnet dexterously on Eleanor's softly fluffed hair, and tied the strings under her chin. "Now," she said, as if she were speaking to one of Dorothy's small daughters—"Now you may go and play."

"I will, if I've not forgotten how," Eleanor promised; "but, children, don't ask me to play very much with Howard Beach. He and I squabble over our toys."

Eleanor was not happy, but the novelty of her environment kept her from knowing quite how unhappy she was, and

nobody else knew, for in the fresh air and freedom she grew visibly younger day by day. The worn look left her face, and sometimes, with a sudden tremor, she wondered if her mirror showed the truth, she looked so girlish.

"Almost young enough to paint," she said once, nodding at her reflection in the glass. Then she looked out of the window at Jessamine and Beach in the garden. He sat in the shade of a live-oak painting, and she could see full into his face; it was so rugged and clear-eyed that out of the shadow he seemed to penetrate the meaning of the sunshine. Jessamine was part of the sunshine; she stood in it, and belonged to it, from her dazzling hair to the hem of her bright dress. Her voice rose through its stillness in a sweet mock-pathetic tone.

"Little Jessamine won't have any chance to make anybody any Christmas presents if you don't finish the picture pretty soon, Mr. Beach."

Eleanor went downstairs to Dorothy. "Jessamine is the queerest child," she said. "I just heard her saying that she was tired of posing—or pretty nearly saying it. Any other girl would think it was *such* a compliment to be asked by him."

"Oh, I think Jessamine appreciates it," Dorothy said; "only, when she began, she had no idea it would last so near to Christmas. It's a little hard, but of course she's glad to do it."

"Dorothy," Eleanor cried, "if somebody died just before Christmas would you stop to bury him?"

Dorothy looked up from her work, half amused, half grave. "Why, auntie, papa died just before Christmas—don't you remember? It was then that Charlie came and comforted us. I think that's why we've always made so much of the season." Her face broke into a smile. "Poor Charlie had a mighty hard time at first—he was so young to be a guardian, and so shy."

The holiday feeling gathered strength with each new day. Even Eleanor came to be genuinely swayed by it, and when the twenty-fourth of December came and the whole house was to be decorated she forgot for a while that there was anything of importance but Christmas greens and ladders and nails. Beach had gone to New Orleans, ostensibly to see the city in its festive bustle, but really because the fever for buying presents had attacked him, too. Jessamine claimed to be glad of a vacation from the picture, but she wandered about like an odd sheep, doing small, inconsequent tasks, while Eleanor did the planning of the decoration, the draping of vines, and the massing of holly, with Penn at her right hand.

Dorothy and Louise and Mr. Charlie bustled to and fro with a hundred things upon their minds, giving general directions and praising effects; Dabney retired into herself and practiced on the piano, and the children were in everybody's way until Dorothy detailed Jessamine to take them driving for as long as her patience lasted. It did not last for more than an hour, and she came back, looking a trifle bored, just as Eleanor and Penn finished the decorating.

Penn was out on the gallery, trying to get started for home. It was a saying among the families on the Point that Penn put in his spare time at home, reading law, but did his regular work at Mr. Charlie's. Jessamine turned the children loose in the yard, and marched by him without any exchange of pleasantry. In the room where Dorothy and Eleanor were giving a last admiring glance to the beautified walls, she sank into a chair.

"I'm tired to death!" she exclaimed. "Aunt Eleanor, you must be absolutely worn to shreds."

"I haven't felt it at all—I never get tired down here," Eleanor answered. Her eyes were bright and her cheeks flushed with excitement. She took off the sunbonnet she had been wearing to protect her hair and swayed it girlishly to and fro. "I was tired to death before I came," she added. Her face grew whimsical. "Do you know, I almost believe that when I thought I came to Pontomoc I died, and this is my resurrection."

Dorothy turned from her rapt consideration of effects. "What do you mean by that, Aunt Eleanor?" she asked in a puzzled tone. "You and Penn have been talking in riddles all day."

Jessamine leaned back in her chair. There was a queer little flash in her eyes. "Shall I call Penn in to interpret?" she asked. "He's still out on the gallery talking to Charlie."

"Don't stir, dear," Eleanor said, putting out a deterring hand. "I only meant that Pontomoc is about my idea of Heaven."

Jessamine caught her aunt in a swift embrace. "It's just Heaven to have you here," she declared.

The contact of the girl's warm, soft cheek was unexpectedly moving to Eleanor. She dropped her head upon Jessamine's shoulder, and clung to her as if she were clinging to happiness. "I've been so lonesome," she murmured; "you don't know how it hurts to be lonesome."

"Yes, I do," Jessamine said, and her voice grew almost sharp. "I'm not a child."

Eleanor looked up and caught a look of bitterness on the girl's face. "Oh, I'm so sorry," was all she could say. "Perhaps everybody knows what it is, but I didn't think people who belonged here could be lonesome."

Jessamine closed her lips firmly and nodded her head. "They can," she declared. "I believe even you are lonesome here sometimes," she added in a different tone—"the way you keep watching for letters."

"Oh, letters!" Eleanor answered carelessly, although it troubled her to think that her secret restlessness had shown itself. "It's one of my bad habits to watch for them. You know what Thoreau says: 'In proportion as our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post-office.'"

Jessamine sighed. "I don't know quotations and things," she said wistfully.

"You're better without them, honey," Eleanor declared. "They cost such a lot." She picked up the white sunbonnet and went to her own room.

The mirror had a new story to tell her as she looked into it. There were tears in her eyes. She turned and walked up and down the room, thinking bitter thoughts. "I'd better go back," she said once, half aloud. She stopped at the window and looked out, trying to see through her perplexity. Penn Saunders and Mr. Charlie had walked down on to the pier together; Penn was rowing away now, and Mr. Charlie stood on the pier-head alone, taking a moment's rest. Eleanor had long ago renewed her old

"I—I DON'T BELIEVE I CAN, CHARLIE"

comradeship with him, and she had noticed that his gentle wisdom was a refuge to every one. She ran bareheaded downstairs and out the garden path to the pier. In spite of her trouble she smiled to think of running about bareheaded on the eve of Christmas.

"Charlie," she said as she joined him, "your foolish relative is in trouble—she wants your advice."

"The blind stands ready to lead the blind," Mr. Charlie laughed.

She dropped on to one of the seats and looked up at him. There was a quiver about her lips. "You'd better send me back where I came from without waiting for New Year's. I've been making Jessamine unhappy."

"Nonsense," Mr. Charlie expostulated.

"No," said Eleanor, and the color came up and burned over her face, "it's my foolish friendship for Penn. I'm so much older, and he's such a dear—I never dreamed it could be misunderstood. In fact, I supposed that there were some things that one gained by growing old, but it seems that one gains nothing and loses everything. I ought to have known; but then she seemed so interested in Howard Beach——"

Mr. Charlie sat down beside her. "Something has happened between Penn and Jessamine," he said—"something before you came. Dorothy and I think they quarreled over her posing. Penn had a foolish notion that it wasn't proper; it was just a bit of crankiness, but he carried it too far. We had been thinking them as good as engaged before that, but I suppose Jessamine resented his trying to dictate. So you see it isn't your fault at all."

"But what a time for her aunt to come blundering in and monopolizing him! I never expected to make that kind of a troublesome aunt."

Mr. Charlie smiled, but Eleanor's face was deeply troubled.

"I ought to have known better," she went on. "I ought to have known that a girl and boy like that couldn't live here side by side without loving each other."

"Don't you think Jessamine is a trifle unreasonable?" Mr. Charlie asked. "She quarrels with Penn and seems to be interested in another man, and then she feels badly because Penn devotes himself to another woman. I don't think I'd grieve much over my part in it if I were you. It will all come straight soon enough."

Eleanor gazed across the water with eyes narrowed to keep back the tears. "They would have made it up long ago if I hadn't been here," she declared. "That's always the way. When things begin to go wrong misunderstanding follows misunderstanding—oh, I know, and I can't forgive myself."

"But no one had told you about their quarrel."

Eleanor shook her head, refusing the excuse. Her lips were quivering. "What can I *do*?" she asked.

Mr. Charlie was silent a little while. Her distress was too poignant to be treated lightly. "Wouldn't it relieve the situation all around if you seemed a little more interested in Beach?" he ventured after he had thought. "It doesn't sound right to say, 'Why don't you absorb his attention so that the other two will be thrown together?'—but you women know how to manage such things."

Eleanor turned her face suddenly away. "I—I don't believe I can, Charlie," she said. "I'm not skillful in such tactics, like most women. And then, you see, we used to be better friends. We misunderstood each other. I thought I cared more for my work than for friendship, and when the two clashed I let friendship go. I've tried to make it right since, but I can't; he was disappointed in me—that's all."

"At least," Mr. Charlie began—he put his hand gently over hers, and his voice was a trifle husky, for they had always thought of her as unusually successful and happy—"At least, you can be proud of the work you have done. No one can do the best work without some sacrifice."

She flashed around toward him defiantly. "Well, I'm not proud of it," she said. "What good do I get out of it for myself? What comfort is it to *me*?"

He hesitated. She had never talked like this to him before, only to Penn. "Why, your work *is* you, isn't it?" he asked.

"No, it isn't. If it were why should I be wandering about trying to learn the secret of other people's happiness?"

His hand closed more firmly over hers. "Is that why you came to Pontomoc?"

She nodded, choking back a sob. "But I came too late. 'No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season of Christmas,' and it should have been written, 'no woman.'"

"Eleanor," Mr. Charlie exclaimed, "Jessamine has been making *you* unhappy."

She drew her hand away and sprang to her feet. "Oh, how you must despise me," she murmured. For a moment a confusion of justifications crowded to her lips. "It is just because she is so young—so beautiful. You can hardly understand a life that grows poorer instead of richer every year. I have sacrificed too much to my work—my heart and soul, pretty nearly——" She paused, recognizing the impossibility of making him forget what he had seen. "There is one comfort—Jessamine need never know," she added finally. "I shall soon be gone, and she can choose between them."

The sun set before they started back to the house, and the short winter twilight was almost gone. As they walked up through the garden together a thin fog closed around them; it was blowing across the Point from the southeast, and it soon stretched across the bay, blotting out the faint color in the west.

They loitered, talking of indifferent things. "We'll not be able to see the Potosi fireworks at all if the fog grows any thicker," Mr. Charlie said.

"You have lots of your own, don't you?"

"Yes, but we usually see them sparkling up on both sides of the bay."

"Think of it—twenty-five years since I've seen fireworks on Christmas," Eleanor sighed, as if the lack of them had been her chief sorrow.

"We'll give you plenty of them to-night," Mr. Charlie promised, pleased that she had regained her poise.

The supper bell rang out and they went into the house. During the meal she was marvelously gay. Her cheeks had never looked so bright, and no one noticed that she was pale around the lips. Neither Penn nor Beach was there, but they were coming later in the evening, after the children's bedtime. Until they came there was an opportunity for every one but Dorothy and Louise to rest.

"I'm going to my room a little while," Eleanor said to Jessamine. "I'm tired after all, but I'll be down pretty soon. Don't call me if Penn and Mr. Beach come before I appear."

She went into the hall on her way upstairs. The fog, drifting in through the open door, felt like balm to her face. She went outside and wandered through it, thinking that in a moment she would turn back. The habit of her feet led them down the path to the pier, and she heard the rowboat nosing among the piles with a soft recurrent thud. The sound was as restless as her mood. She untied the boat and stepped into it, wondering why she had ever thought of

shutting herself up in the house. Lights from the Potosi shore glimmered faintly through the fog, like very mediocre deeds. The red and green signals on the drawbridge were dimmed jewels. She took up the oars and rowed toward them. It would soon be time for the coast train, and Howard Beach would be on it, coming back from the city; she had a fancy to see its windows flash out of the obscurity and pass.

"I have been making Jessamine unhappy"—"Jessamine has been making you unhappy"—it was better to be out alone in the weird, caressing mist than to mingle with other people when she could neither enjoy them nor add to their pleasure. She rowed strenuously against the incoming tide, regretting her whole life. Years of hard work stretched behind her, as colorless as the night, and empty of joy. Memory took her heart in its hands and wrung it with pitiless details of retrospect. Again and again she had sacrificed more to her work than her love for it justified. She had given more than she had received until her nature was bankrupt, having no resource of joy. She drew in the oars and put her cold hands to her burning forehead.

The wind and tide together drifted her boat away from the bridge and up the bay, midway between the shores. Half mechanically she picked up the oars and began to row, wondering how long she had drifted. It seemed like hours, and yet the coast train had not come.

Hidden by the fog, a conchshell blew a summons to the drawbridge. Some belated schoonerman was eager to come through and cast anchor for the holidays. The lights at the end of the draw began to move, and Eleanor was vaguely pained, knowing that the coast train must be late or the bridge would not have opened.

From beyond Potosi a faint whistle sounded. The train was coming. She rowed well over toward the Potosi shore to be out of the way of the schooner when it came through; knowing that the train was late, but not knowing how late it was, she had no way of telling how long she had been out on the water, but she was determined to stay now until the train had passed.

She was facing the home shore as she rowed, but it was completely hidden; she felt very far away, and wondered if the family had missed her yet and had begun to be alarmed. Suddenly a rocket gleamed through the fog, breaking into a shower of opals. Another followed it and another. Eleanor had learned the distances along the shore so well that she was sure they came from Mr. Charlie's pier, and it gave her a new pain and loneliness to think that they had neither missed her nor waited for her before beginning their celebration. There was no hurry about getting back.

She turned toward the bridge and waited while the train rumbled out of Potosi. The schooner was feeling its way slowly through the gap in the trestle, with the bridgeman's lantern glimmering on its slackened sails. The draw was still open when the headlight of the train pierced the gloom at the end of the bridge. Eleanor waited breathlessly. She was so close that if the train had to stop until the draw closed she might catch a glimpse of Beach at one of the windows, looking out. It did not seem a poor, inconsequent pleasure; it was something for which to hope.

The train moved more and more slowly and stood still, just as she had wished, but the figures at the windows were mere black silhouettes against the brilliant interiors of the cars. The light shone blindingly into her face for a moment, and then she dropped her head into her arms. The light still shone on her figure, bowed and desolate.

Howard Beach was standing by himself at the rear of the last car. He saw her face distinctly, and when he saw her hide it he ran down the car-steps with an impulse to call her name. She was all alone in the boat, drifting rapidly away from the bridge in an attitude of despair.

The necessity of reaching her kept him from wondering what had happened. He remembered that at intervals along the bridge there were little platforms where workmen, or people who were crossing the trestle on foot, could stand at one side and wait for a train to pass. He seized a brakeman's lantern that was standing by the car-door and held it down into the dark. One of the platforms was so near that at the first slow forward motion of the train he could step on to it. There was only a moment to wait. The car-wheels began to turn, and, still holding the lantern, he swung himself off unobserved.

Eleanor heard her name called; she looked up without believing the reality of the sound. The drawbridge had closed and the train was passing under its faint twin stars. Behind the train, and hanging low under the bridge, a red light swung to and fro. She heard her name beyond all doubt, and, answering, rowed in bewilderment toward the trestle.

Beach crouched on the edge of his little platform, swinging the lantern as low as he could reach, so that it would be out of sight from the train.

"Row close," he called.

She rowed under the edge of the platform. The tide was so full that there was only a little distance for him to drop. The boat jarred and grew steady again. He sat down beside her on the rowing-seat, and their eyes met. Neither of them spoke. Alone in the night, with the brakeman's lantern sending its warm radiance upon the close-pressing walls of fog, each felt sure why the other had come.

The pain did not leave Eleanor's face, and her nature was too direct for equivocation. "Don't be grieved," she said at last. "It's not your fault that I am sorry now it is too late. I never dreamed that you would see me—that I would seem to be asking for pity. It—coming here to watch for you—was a sort of good-by. I—I want you to be happy."

"A good-by," he echoed. He clenched his hand on the edge of the seat between them. "I did not call you to say good-by."

The tears came into her eyes under his gaze and heartache held back her words. Through the pause came the report of a gun—once, twice, three times—at regular intervals. She made a tremulous motion toward the shore, where rockets, one after another, were still tracing blurred silvery lines.

"What is it?" he asked. "I believe you love me. Your work shall not come between us again."

"Jessamine——" she said brokenly. "Even if she does not love you—now that you love her—I—no—no——" She tried to draw away from him toward the edge of the boat.

"But Eleanor," he said, "I love you."

Wonder came into her face, and then joy. The moment was too solemn for caresses. She put out her hands and he locked them tight in his. "Just as I am?" she asked; "in spite of all that I have lost in these pitiful years?"

"Lost?" he said huskily; "in every moment of them you have gained. You——" His voice broke, and the tide carried them in silence away from regret and doubt.

The gun on the home shore continued firing, regularly, monotonously, like a signal or a warning. Its sound meant nothing at first to the two in the floating circle of light inclosed by fog, but at last the insistence of it reached their ears.

"What does that mean?" Eleanor wondered.

"Does any one know you are out here?" Beach asked. "That doesn't sound like celebrating. Perhaps they are firing to guide you back."

"We'd better row in," she decided. Each took an oar, and they headed the boat toward home. The thoughts of the day came back to Eleanor. "Oh," she said, "I wish that Jessamine and Penn might have straightened things out between them, too."

Beach laughed contentedly. "If they haven't, they soon will," he declared. "A good example is everything."

The outlines of the shore began to form through the fog. There was a flickering light low on the sand, and suddenly a great bonfire leaped into flame. There were figures moving around it, and Eleanor gave the yodle which was a greeting or a rallying cry upon the Point.

The answer came back in a chorus. Eager figures ran along the pier, and as the boat touched the landing-stairs Mr. Charlie and Penn lifted Eleanor out of it, nearly dropping her again when they found that she was not alone.

"I stepped off the train and brought her back," Beach said quietly. "She seemed to be lost in the fog."

A babel of questions and outcries arose. Mr. Charlie and Dorothy marched Eleanor between them up the pier. "Couldn't you see the rockets we sent up to guide you?" Dorothy asked. "After we had begun firing them, and you didn't come, Jessamine and Penn rowed 'way up the bay calling you, but came back to see if you had gotten in."

"And when I saw the rockets I thought you had begun the celebration and were leaving me to rest—so I didn't hurry," Eleanor exclaimed in self-reproach.

"Well," Mr. Charlie said, "I bought the rockets especially for you, and we've used them for you. Only, it's too bad you missed them all. We sent up the last one, and then built the fire to take their place."

"But I saw them; they were my celebration just the same, and if you will only forgive me, this will be the happiest Christmas in the world," Eleanor declared. She slipped her hand through his arm. "You see," she went on, "I've found that this isn't Kent."

ALVA—By M. de Blowitz

(*Continued from Page 3*)

signature and the contents of it gave him the key of the whole mystery. This man, I cannot say why, had just been brutally deprived of his place, and without the slightest hesitation he resolved to take his revenge in revealing to the Princess' father the mystery that he had discovered.

"The latter's indignation was terrible. He had an attack which imperiled his life. At 11 P. M. Doctor Alven was sent for, and he took all the necessary measures in order to prevent the father in his wrath from revealing the cause, for the Doctor thus learned the frightful danger with which we were menaced.

"Without a minute's delay he went to see the Princess, awoke Hugot, and ordered the maids to awaken the Princess and myself.

"We immediately prepared to receive the Doctor. He communicated to us the terrible news. He informed us that it was particularly against me that the Sovereign's exasperation was directed, and said that again, accompanied by Hugot and by the two maids, for whom he dreaded a terrible punishment, I must flee without losing a moment. On leaving us he informed us that an hour later his landau with two of his best horses would await us at a side door, and that we would be driven across the frontier, which, moreover, was at a distance of only nine miles.

"Hugot and the two maids, who were cool through all this, had quickly prepared in several bags everything in which I stood in immediate need, and I on my part collected all my jewels and all the silver that the Princess and I possessed.

"It was 4 A. M. when we started and it was hardly five o'clock when we had crossed the frontier.

"As it was to be anticipated that the first act against the Princess would be the kidnaping of Alva, without a minute's delay, and armed with a letter from Alven I set out for the convent, where I immediately saw the Superior, and two hours later Alva—to whom some years before I had paid a visit of several days, on the pretext of visiting, during a holiday, a property of mine on the Danube—was intrusted to my hands.

"Alva, who, save the nuns, had never seen any one but myself, and who perceived all the tenderness that I felt for her—Alva vaguely, so to speak, believed that I was her mother. She flung herself effusively into my arms, and was glad to go with me.

"We settled down, with Hugot and the two maids, on my property, where in an independent country I knew we were quite safe. I devoted myself to Alva's education, having at my disposal more than adequate resources sent to me by the steward from the abundant revenues of the Princess' lands; and we lived there for some years pending the events which were to bring to us the solution of the painful situation in which we found ourselves."

Editor's Note—The story of Alva will be concluded next week.

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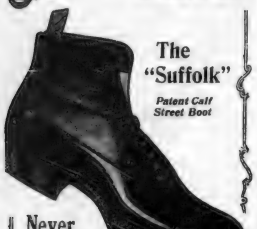

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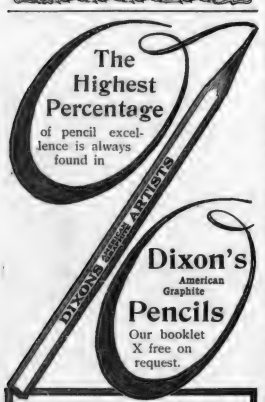

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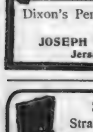

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Matrimony *vs.* A Career

(Continued from Page 9)

It is true that the demands of marriage upon women are exacting. It is true that because of these demands women have been unable to compete with men in the arts and professions and sciences. But even in this hardship there is virtue. The arts and professions and sciences have been sufficiently overcrowded with mediocre talent and inferior ability without their help. If we are to have women entering into these fields, let us have women who excel; women who will reflect honor and glory upon their sex; women of will, and wisdom, and judgment, and genius; extraordinary women, if you please, of high ideals and practical demonstration, normal, well-poised, and broad and clear as to view. That these women will marry need be in no sense disparaging.

Marriage Never Killed a Genius

Marriage never killed a genius. It could not. Genius will out. Not homely living, nor practical conditions, nor the exigencies of a bad marriage, nor yet the more formidable comfort and content of a good one, can put down genius or stifle its expression. For genius is not a matter of time spent in practice. It is not evidenced by a trick of the hand that carves or paints, nor is it the output of the polished intellect. That which we call genius is the voice of the soul, speaking through these mediums its message of beauty and love and truth. It is not by the manual labor of drilling at these various arts that the notes are found which strike the chord for lasting fame, but by the development of the individual soul. When that soul has grown to such magnificence and fullness that its message is ripe and ready to benefit, it overflows; and no power on earth can confine the greater soul to the limits it has outgrown.

When talent confronts us we marvel at the beauties of finesse, of technique, of color and form. When genius speaks we are dumb. We are awed by something greater than art, which is Nature—the soul of Nature—flashing forth its message as a spark that passes criticism, passes admiration, and seeks and finds the soul of man, as swift and straight as steel goes to the loadstone.

Thus does genius work. It does not demand for the fulfillment of its purpose the setting apart of a life or the abnormal twisting of one's natural instincts and inclinations. To make every hour as famous as we can; to do the best there is in us; to carry out, in less illumined hours, the promptings of those enlightened moments when the divine within us wakes; to be what we would seem; to have within us the genius with which we would impress the world; to live simply and sincerely and naturally, these are the ways and means to lasting fame. That which we are, nor more nor less, is embodied in that which we do. Our accomplishment suffers by our limitations and thrives with our development. But the great work, the complete life is necessary; the complete mental and physical and spiritual life; and these are not attained in the single state, which is one of incompletion. Marriage is popularly called a discipline, but it is more than that. Through its new and certain responsibilities men and women acquire character; through its suffering they gain enduring power; through its joys they learn gratitude, and touch the beauties of humility. A happy marriage is a compact of unselfishness; and out of unselfishness springs all the good of living. There is no emotion that falls to the lot of man so good and so far-reaching in result as unselfish love. There is no surer, quicker means of finding happiness than the wish and effort to make another happy. There is no better equipment for stirring the heart and mind and soul of mankind than by developing the heart and mind and soul of one's self by these means of marriage which God has put at our disposal. No man or woman is of himself a perfect whole; but it rests with himself to obtain the perfection of the unit, by uniting with some heart and mind and soul and self which shall supply, or complement, or round out that which he lacks or wherein he is weak.

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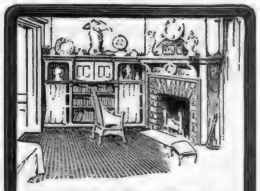

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known, had their genius grown by the aid of wise and proper marriage, which Nature has indicated as a means for man's widest development.

And if marriage be essential to the best attainment of man, it is indispensable to a like attainment in woman. Into the life of every woman must come a time when old-maidism—even old-maidism touched with the saving grace of material and artistic success—is just as barren and empty and joyless as Nature intended that it should be. In every woman the maternal instinct is born; and it develops as the good in her develops. In every human being love is born; and in exact ratio as the desire to love and be loved expands does the human being become better, and the universal brotherhood of mankind become more possible. In every subject of a nation patriotism is born, and as the man or the woman becomes a better citizen, love for his country and devotion to its interests mark the progress of his growth. The good citizen desires the nation of which he is a part to be the strongest nation in the world. And the strength of a nation lies in its homes. The national standards of integrity, morality and statesmanship generate from the homes. The social and economic problems of the day emanate from and evolute toward the homes. The men who directly guide and guard and uphold the nation—its statesmen, its soldiers, its citizens, its merchants, its masters—come out of those homes and are a power for good or for evil according to the mental, moral and physical health of the mothers who bore them, and the atmosphere of the homes in which they were reared.

Why, then, with these possibilities—nay, more, these responsibilities—looming up before womankind, should she not suffer who passes the field where grapes hang heavy and the vintage is rich and rare, to labor in a field of stubble intended for hardier feet; to plow, and furrow, and sow a crop whose fruit is empty husks; to graze in a pasture whose fodder, when it yields at all, cannot satisfy one pang of a good and normal woman's hunger?

Fame never fulfilled a good woman's ideals. The adulation of the public never touched that chord which vibrates only to the adulation of the one. The applauding voice of the multitude never echoed with the resonance that holds in the call of wife and mother; and all of their outstretched hands, though each hold forth a laurel wreath, never rivaled the soft caress that falls from baby hands.

Yet it is not given to every woman to find a mate, and to them that fail of the best that life can give the opening of new avenues and the possibilities of the career are a Godsend. A successful career is better than a bad marriage, and even an unsuccessful struggler after fame has made a happier choice than the woman who marries for convenience.

As for the world, it cares not for the sex of its genius. It wants the best, and needs the best, and will applaud the best, be man or woman its creator; and it wants it just as hard as they who have it can possibly want to give it.

Woman's Touch in Arts and Professions

As for the arts and professions, they must of necessity benefit by woman's handling. In all the fine arts delicacy of touch, instinct, imagination, sympathy, fineness—peculiarly feminine characteristics—are essential qualifications for success. When woman has added to these the broader view and the better logic that will result from contact with affairs, the consistent reasoning power that will result from equal educational advantages and physical temperament that equals her spiritual endowment, she will be equipped for the "career" in a way that will revolutionize the history of ethics. She will paint pictures that "almost" breathe; she will carve stone into sculpture that "almost" speaks; she will write books that "almost" throb with the living pulse of a human heart. And when she has won her fame and worn her laurels she will realize that she has "almost" imitated that which she was qualified to do—to put into the world a living, vital, influential reality, with an actual soul to uplift the soul of man, with a palpitating heart to warm the hearts of its fellows, with a thinking mind to be a force amongst intellects.

There are many paths by which women may attain to the glory of a "career." The coming years will offer greater opportunities and the coming woman will meet them with greater capabilities. But there can be only one career in which woman can reach the pinnacle of her powers and utilize to the full every talent that God has given her. And that career is Motherhood.

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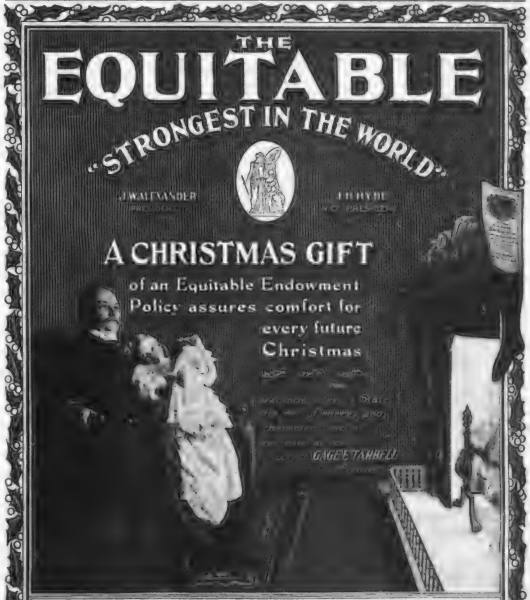

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The Reading Table

Lord Milner's Bath

"Some of the unfortunate happenings in South Africa were caused by the failure of officials in high places to note warning conditions which were obvious to people occupying less exalted points of view," said an American mining engineer recently returned from the Transvaal.

"Lord Milner, for example, is a statesman of conspicuous ability, yet he has at times been blind to facts which were obvious to every one else.

"Some time before war was declared between the British and the Boers there was a water famine in Johannesburg. There had been no effort to expand the water system to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population, and the city fairly gasped with thirst.

"The citizens, or rather inhabitants, had other grievances, and it was decided to invite Lord Milner to Johannesburg and lay matters before him. The first morning after his arrival he amazed the hotel attendants by ordering a bath. Bathing was a luxury which even the rich were denied at that time. Poor people had to go unwashed, while the wealthy dipped daintily into basins filled with imported English soda at two shillings a bottle.

"But Lord Milner's orders could not be ignored. Pitchers were drained of scant contents, but the sum total made a poor showing for the prospective plunge of His Lordship.

"'Fill the tub with soda water,' exclaimed the proprietor.

"So Lord Milner splashed all unconscious of the drought and panic his ablutions had brought upon the rest of the establishment.

"Later that day, among the grievances submitted to him was the woful scarcity of water.

"'Scarcity of water?' he repeated. 'Scarcity of water? I've observed no scarcity, gentlemen; I've had my bath this morning.'"

A Good and Faithful Servant

While Mark Twain was spending some time recently at his summer home, Quarry Farm, at Elmira, he found that, preparing to take a drive one evening, he should remain out until late. He therefore told his hostler that he need not wait for him, instructing him when he had finished his work to lock the stable and place the key under a stone, the location of which Mr. Clemens described with much exactness.

When Mr. Clemens reached home after his drive he was surprised to find that the key was not in its place. When his patience had been exhausted he awoke the hostler and received this explanation:

"Mr. Clemens, I found a better place."

The Prayerful Ashman

"A neighbor of mine 'out at Rye has a most observant youngster," said Francis Wilson at the Players' Club, New York, the other night. "Not long ago he said to his mother:

"'Mother, I think the man who takes away our ashes is the best man I know. I think he is even better than father.'

"His mother expressed surprise and asked why he thought the ashman better than his father.

"'Well,' said the boy, 'he came with a poor old mule the other day and after he had filled his wagon he told the mule to get up. But the mule was tired and would not go. The man whipped the mule hard, but even then it would not go. Then that good man sat down on the grass and told the poor mule all about Jesus and the bad place.'"

A Comfortable Visit

Since John Barrett's appointment to a Commissionership to represent the St. Louis World's Fair he has become greatly interested in the history and future of Missouri.

In Hongkong recently Mr. Barrett in conversation with a traveler from St. Louis said:

"I like the patriotic way in which natives of Missouri speak of their commonwealth. I never met but one renegade Missourian, and he was a long way from his native health.

"It was in Oregon. I had occasion to take a trip by stage and I climbed on the front seat to talk with the driver, who seemed to be an interesting character.

"'You are a Missourian, are you not?' said I, judging from his accent and wishing to pay him a compliment.

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"Instantly the driver pulled up his horses, wound the reins savagely about the brake, and turning upon me, fairly yelled in my face:

"'Look a-here, pardner, don't yer never make thet crack again. My parents went to Missouri onct to visit, and they visited ther twenty year, and durin' that ther visit I was born, but let me tell yer right now, onct for all, thet I'm no derned Missourian.'"

A New School of Medicine

"Dry docks?" quizzedly repeated a Vassar senior along about commencement time to Senator Chauncey M. Depew as the subject came up in a conversation between them. "Why, Senator Depew, what is a dry dock?"

"A thirsty physician, to be sure," replied Mr. Depew, as his face expanded into one of his good-natured smiles.

Doctor James' Poster Trousers

Dr. Edmund J. James, President of the Northwestern University, is a self-made man. It was largely through his own exertions that he was able to go through Harvard and complete his education at German universities.

At times in his student career he had difficulties in making ends meet, and in this connection he tells an interesting story of an expedient he invoked while at Harvard to obtain a slight assistance from a relative who had promised to further his ambitions but whose performance in that regard had been slow.

Doctor James' roommate at college was Joseph French Johnson, now Professor of Political Economy in the University of New York.

The young men were from the same town. "With my frugal relative," said Doctor James, "my friend Johnson stood better than I. Whatever he did was held up as an example. One of my early ambitions in college was to own an extra pair of trousers which might be kept exclusively for wear on Sundays and other special occasions. Other needs, however, were so urgent that I found I should have to content myself with one pair, and, at the time of which I speak, these were not all that could be desired.

"One day Johnson turned up with a brand-new pair. I realized that if my economical relative knew that Johnson had a second pair of trousers I also should be able to get a pair.

"The question was how to make a convincing presentation of the case. Simply to write did not commend itself to my judgment. Finally I hit upon a plan which I diplomatically presented to Johnson. It was that we should make an express package of the new trousers and send them to my relative. This would show that Johnson not only boasted of new trousers but that he actually owned them without being under the stern necessity of wearing them every day. I must confess that it was an act of great friendly self-denial on Johnson's part, for his elder pair were in but fragile health. The experiment worked like a charm. By return express Johnson's trousers came back and with them, consigned to me, was a pair which the old gentleman had himself selected. The cut was a trifle bizarre and the pattern might have gladdened the eye of a poster artist."

Professor Johnson tells the rest of the story. "James' appearance in his new trousers was an event in our college life. One of the first persons he encountered as he stalked across the campus was President Eliot, who had a high opinion of James' genius and sense of humor, and took pleasure in crossing wits with him.

"'Good-morning, Mr. James,' said the President; 'let me congratulate you on looking almost as bright as you really are.'

"'Mr. Eliot,' replied James, assuming a statuesque attitude designed to bring his resplendent trousers into conspicuous relief, 'I have reached that proud position in life where I can speak of my other pants.'"

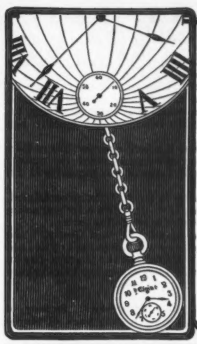
The Lucky Thirteen

A story which illustrates Joseph Choate's readiness of wit and the patriotic character of his Americanism comes to this country through diplomatic channels.

In a recent conversation with the Queen the talk happened to drift to folk-lore, superstition and kindred topics.

"Do you in America," asked the Queen, "believe that 13 is an unlucky number?"

"No, Your Majesty, we do not," replied Mr. Choate; "the eternal foundations of our Republic were built upon the number 13."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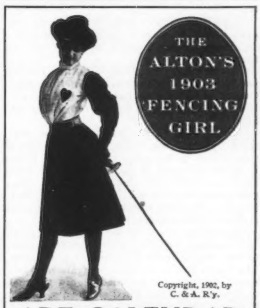
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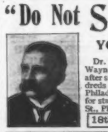
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THE PIT

(Continued from Page 11)

"Can I come in? I followed the servant right up, you see. I know——"

"Yes, yes. Come in," answered Jadwin.

Laura, her face flushing, threw a fold of the couch cover over her costume as Gretry, his hat still on his head, stepped quickly into the room.

Jadwin met him half-way, and Laura from her place on the couch heard the rapidly spoken words between the general and his lieutenant.

"Now we're in for it!" Gretry exclaimed.

"Yes—well?" Jadwin's voice was as incisive and quick as the fall of an ax.

"I've just found out," said Gretry, "that Crookes and his crowd are going to take hold to-morrow. There'll be the deuce to pay in the morning. They are going to attack us the minute the gong goes."

"Who's with them?"

"I don't know; nobody does. Sweeny, of course. But he has a gang back of him—besides, he's got good credit with the banks. I told you you'd have to fight him sooner or later."

"Well, we'll fight him, then. Don't you get scared. Crookes ain't the Great Mogul."

"Holy Moses, I'd like to know who is, then."

"I am. And he's got to know it. There's not room for Crookes and me in this game. One of us two has got to control this market. If he gets in my way, by Heaven, I'll smash him!"

"Well, then, J., you and I have got to do some tall talking to-night. You'd better come down to my office right away. Court is there already. It was him, nervy little cuss, that found out about Crookes. Can you come now, at once? Good-evening, Mrs. Jadwin: I'm sorry to take him from you, but business is business."

No, it was not. To the wife of the great manipulator, listening with a sinking heart to this courier from the front, it was battle. The Battle of the Streets was again in array. Again the trumpet sounded, again the rush of thousands of feet filled all the air. Even here, here in her home, her husband's head upon her lap, in the quiet and stillness of her hour, the distant rumble came to her ears. Somewhere, far off there in the darkness of the night, the great forces were manœuvring for position once more. To-morrow would come the grapple, and one or the other must fall—her husband or the enemy. How keep him to herself when the great conflict impended? She knew how the thunder of the captains and the shoutings appealed to him. She had seen him almost leap to his arms out of her embrace. He was all the man she had called him; any less strong, less eager, less brave, she would have loved him less. Yet she had lost him again, lost him at the very moment she believed she had won him back.

"Don't go, don't go," she whispered to him as he kissed her good-by. "Oh, dearest, don't go! This was my evening."

"I must, I must, Laura. Good-by, old girl. Don't keep me—see, Sam is waiting."

He kissed her hastily twice.

"Now, Sam," he said, turning toward the broker.

"Good-night, Mrs. Jadwin."

"Good-by, old girl."

They turned toward the door.

"You see, young Court was down there at the bank, and he noticed that checks——"

The voices died away as the hangings of the entrance fell to place. The front door clashed and closed.

Laura sat upright in her place, listening, one fist pressed against her lips.

Crushed, broken, Laura laid herself down among the cushions, her face buried in her arm. Above her and around her rose the dimly lit gallery, lowering with luminous shadows. Only a point or two of light illuminated the place. The gold frames of the pictures reflected it dully. The massive organ pipes, just outlined in faint blurs of light, towered far into the gloom above. The whole place, with its half-seen gorgeous hangings, its darkened magnificence, was like a vast, dim interior of Byzantium.

Lost, beneath the great height of the dome, and in the wide reach of the floor space, in her foolish finery, Laura Jadwin lay half hidden among the cushions of the couch. If she wept, she wept in silence, and the muffling stillness of the lofty gallery was broken but once, when a cry, half whisper, half sob, rose to the deaf, blind darkness:

"Oh, now I am alone, alone, alone!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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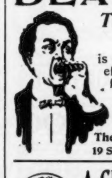

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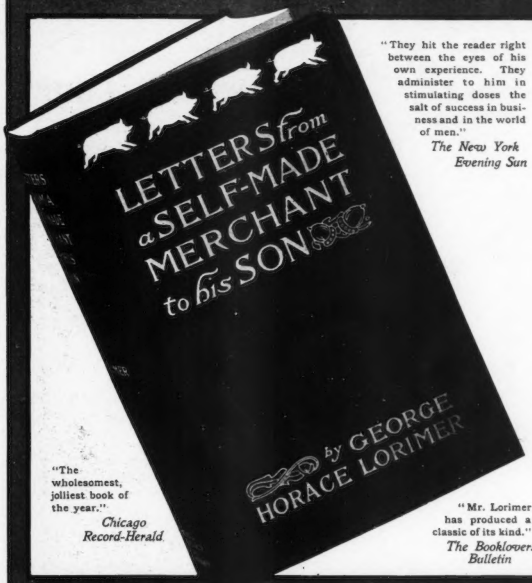

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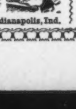

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